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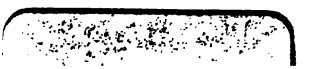

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COMPANION

FOR THE

FESTIVALS AND FASTS

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

PRINCIPALLY SELECTED AND ALTERED FROM

NELSON'S

COMPANION FOR THE FESTIVALS AND FASTS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

WITH

FORMS OF DEVOTION.

BY

JOHN HENRY HOBART, D. D.

Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New-York.

FIFTEENTH EDITION.

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PREFACE.

In drawing up the following volume, the Editor took for his guide the excellent work of *Nelson on the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England.* Considerable change, however, has been made in the *arrangement*, the *matter*, and *style* of the original work. The evidences of the Christian Religion, and the constitution of the Christian Church, are discussed in preliminary instructions; and on the latter subject much useful matter has been selected from *Stevens's Treatise on the Church*, from *Potter on Church Government*, from which the preceding tract is compiled, and from the excellent work of *Daubeny* on the same subject. In the Chapter on Sunday, will be found an explanation and illustration of the Liturgy of the Church, connected with directions for the use of it; and on every Festival and Fast an explanation is given of the particular service for the day. These parts of the work are *principally* compiled from the various and excellent *commentaries* on the Book of *Common Prayer*, and from a small tract, entitled, *Directions for a devout and decent Behaviour in the Public Worship of God.* The Devotions are chiefly selected and altered from a book distinguished for its primitive and fervent piety, entitled, *Devotions in the Ancient Way of Offices, published by Dean Hickes.* The above are some of the principal particulars in which the

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present work differs from that of Nelson; and the humble hope is cherished, that they will be found useful improvements. The method of question and answer has been preserved; as it is calculated to awaken inquiry, to give variety and force to illustration and reasoning, and particularly to fix the attention of the young, for whose instruction books of this kind are peculiarly useful and necessary. The earnest wish is entertained that the present volume may be a useful manual in the hands of parents, guardians, and others, for the instruction of youth in the principles of religion, and in the constitution of the Church.

It has been the object of the Editor in the selections from Nelson, to condense the *style* and *matter* without, however, omitting any thing that could be deemed immediately useful or important. He has added a few *notes;* and has occasionally introduced in the body of the work, observations, which he may perhaps claim as his own. His principal office, however, has been that of a Compiler. And if the book should prove a useful companion in the exalted exercises of the Christian life; if, while it serves to impress on the members of the Episcopal Communion the excellence of their truly Apostolic and Primitive Church, it should excite them to adorn their profession by corresponding fervour of piety and sanctity of manners; the Editor will be amply rewarded for the labour and attention which he has bestowed upon the work.

New-York, 1804.

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PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS

CONCERNING THE

EVIDENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

Q. WHAT *do you mean by the* Christian religion?

A. The Christian religion is that revelation which God made of his will by his Son Jesus Christ, wherein are contained doctrines to be believed, precepts to be practised, and motives to enforce obedience.

Q. Wherein appears the truth *of the* Christian religion?

A. The truth of the Christian religion appears from that full and clear evidence which our Saviour and his apostles gave of their divine mission and authority, by prophecies and miracles, and from the nature of the religion they taught, which is worthy of God, and tends to promote the happiness and welfare of mankind.

Q. What proof *have we that there ever was such a* person *as* Jesus Christ, *and that he* suffered *under* Pontius Pilate?

A. It is a fact which has never been disputed, that there was such a person as *Jesus Christ*, who lived in the reign of the emperor *Tiberius*. It is not only universally acknowledged by Christians, but hath been owned by *Jews*[a] who have written of those times; and the *Heathens* themselves have borne their testimony to the truth of this matter of fact, as *Tacitus*, *Suetonius*, and *Pliny* the younger. That the same *Jesus* was crucified under *Pontius Pilate*, is averred both by Christians and *Jews*. The Christians professed it, notwithstanding the ignominy they might thereby seem to bring upon themselves, who worshipped him as a God; and the *Jews* owned it, notwithstanding the provocation they might thereby give to the Christians; for it was by their ancestors that he was delivered to be crucified. It is very probable there were public records of the whole matter at *Rome*, as the account was sent by *Pontius Pilate*

[a] Josephus.

to *Tiberius:* For the ancient Christians, in their apologies, appealed to it, which they had too much understanding and modesty to have done, if no such account had ever been sent, or had not been then extant. The great enemies of Christianity, *Celsus* and *Julian*, never made this matter of fact a controversy. No history, therefore, can be better established by the unanimous testimony of people very different from one another, than that of the life and death of *Jesus Christ*

Q. What evidence *did* Jesus Christ *give that he was a* prophet *sent from God?*

A. All the former prophecies which related to the *Messiah* were fulfilled in him. This ought to have been a convincing argument to the *Jews*, who owned these prophecies to have been of divine inspiration. He received the testimony of a voice from Heaven several times. He was endowed with the power of working miracles; and particularly with the gift of prophecy, proved and made good by the fulfilment of his own predictions; than which nothing can be a greater evidence of a divine mission, because the greatest proof of infinite power and knowledge.

Q. What prophecies *that related to the* Messiah *were* fulfilled *in* Jesus Christ?

A. All those prophecies that concerned the *birth* and *life* of the Messiah, his *death*, *resurrection*, and *ascension* were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Q. What prophecies *that related to the* birth *of the* Messiah *were fulfilled in* Jesus?

A. According to *Jacob's* prophecy,[b] the *Messiah* was to come about the time of the dissolution of the *Jewish* government; the *sceptre was not to depart from* Judah, that is, the power and authority of the *Jewish* government were not to cease, *till Shilo came;* by whom the ancient *Jews* did understand the *Messiah*. It was also foretold by the prophets *Haggai* and *Malachi*,[c] that he should come before the destruction of the *second temple;* and the destruction of the temple was foretold by *Daniel*,[d] with the precise time of our Saviour's coming. And to manifest to the world that *Christ* is come, the *Jews* are now dispersed among all nations, and their government lost, and their families confounded: The second temple is long since destroyed, and the city of *Jerusalem* made desolate, which

b Genesis xlix. 10. c Haggai ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. Mal. iii. 1. d Daniel ix. 24, 25, 26, 27.

was foretold should be after the cutting off of the *Messiah*.[e] As the *time* of *Christ's* birth was foretold, so was the *place* of it. It was prophesied that the *Messiah* should be born in *Bethlehem* of *Judea*;[f] and the providence of God so ordered it, that *Joseph* and *Mary* should be brought up to *Bethlehem*, by a general tax which *Augustus* then laid; not only that she might be delivered, but that their names might be there entered, and their family ascertained and proved, without doubt, to have descended from *David*. The person of whom our *Saviour* was born was likewise foretold: according to *Isaiah*, she was to be a *virgin*; and thus Christ was emphatically *the seed of the woman*, agreeably to the promise made to our first parents.

Q. What prophecies *which related to the* life *of the* Messiah *were fulfilled in* Jesus?

A. The *meanness* and *obscurity*, and sorrows of his life, are expressed by *Isaiah*.[g] The Messiah was spoken of by the *prophets* as a person that was to be reputed vile and abject, who should be despised and rejected of men.[h] Accordingly, in the gospel, *Christ* is called a *Nazarene*, and had not where to lay his head; and yet, notwithstanding these circumstances, he was to be eminent for his *patience* and *meekness*.[i] His abode was to be chiefly in *Galilee*;[j] and, accordingly, Christ was brought up at *Nazareth*, and dwelt at *Capernaum*. His character of a prophet was asserted by *Moses* and *Isaiah*;[k] and this character Christ sustained, in that he foretold future contingences. His power of working many and great miracles was foretold by the same prophet;[l] and this prediction was accomplished by Christ in such a manner that many of the people believed in him, and said, *When* Christ *cometh shall he do greater miracles than this man hath done?*[m] It was foretold that the people should receive him with joy and triumph, when *he came riding upon an ass*;[n] which prediction was afterwards fulfilled;[o] and that he should be sold for *thirty pieces of silver*,[p] the price which *Judas* received for betraying his master.[q]

Q. What prophecies *which related to the* death *of the* Messias *were fulfilled in* Jesus?

A. His violent death was foretold by the prophets, and by several types which represented and prefigured his death,

e Micah v. 2. f Matt. ii. 6. g Isaiah liii. 2, 3. h Psalm lxix. 9, 10, Isaiah lxi. 1.
i Isaiah liii. 7. j Isaiah ix. 1. k Deut. xviii. 15.
l Isaiah xxxv. 5, 6. m John vii. 31. n Zech. ix. 9.
o Matt. xxi. 5 p Zech. xi. 12. q Matt. xxvii. 3.

Abraham's offering up of *Isaac* was a type of *Christ's* being offered upon the cross; *Isaac's* carrying the wood on his shoulders was a type of *Christ's* carrying his own cross; and the brazen serpent and the paschal lamb prefigured *Christ's* being lifted up, and his being made a sacrifice for the sins of the people. Our Saviour was *buffeted* and *spit upon*, according to the prophecy of *Isaiah*.[r] He had *vinegar given him to drink mingled with gall*, and his *garments parted among the soldiers by casting lots*, according to *David*.[s] He was *numbered with the transgressors*,[t] being condemned as a malefactor, to suffer with malefactors, being crucified between two thieves. He cried out under his sufferings, according to *David*,[u] and prayed for his wicked persecutors, according to *Isaiah*.[v] It was foretold he should *make his grave with the rich*,[w] and, accordingly, he was put, after his crucifixion, into the tomb of Joseph, a *rich* man of Arimathea.

Q. What prophecies which related to the resurrection and ascension of the Messiah *were fulfilled in* Jesus?

A. The *resurrection* of *Jesus Christ* was predicted by *David*; *thou will not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption*,[x] for to this purpose this passage is applied by St. *Peter*.[y] The time was foretold by *Hosea* to be *after two days*,[z] as several of the *Rabbies* understood that place. And it was prefigured by the type of *Jonah's* deliverance when he had been offered up, and by the type of *Jonah* being three days and three nights in the *whale's belly*.[a] His sitting at the right hand of God, which supposeth his ascension into Heaven, was foretold by the royal prophet,[b] *Sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy foot-stool*. The accomplishment of the forementioned prophecies is a sufficient proof that our Saviour was a person sent from God.

Q. How was Jesus proved to be sent from God *by a* voice from Heaven?

A. When he began his public ministry, when he was baptized by *John* in the presence of a great assembly of the people, the Holy Ghost descended upon him, with a voice from Heaven, which said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*.[c] And this voice was again repeated, though not so publicly, at his *transfiguration* on

[r] Isaiah l. 6. [s] Psalm xxii. 18. Isa. vi. [t] Isaiah liii. 12. [u] Psalm xxii. 1. [v] Isaiah liii. 4. [w] Isaiah liii. 9. [x] Psalm xvi. 10. [y] Acts ii. 27. [z] Hosea vi. 2. [a] Matt. xii. 40. [b] Psalm cx. 1. [c] Matt. iii. 16, 17

the mount;[d] and is mentioned by St. *Peter* as a considerable argument of *Christ's* divine authority:[e] *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we have made known unto you the power and coming of the Lord* Jesus Christ, *but were eye-witnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from Heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount.* And a *third* time there came a voice to him from Heaven in the hearing of all the people.[f]

Q. What further evidence *is there that* Jesus *was a person* sent from God?

A. Jesus proved that he was sent from God, by the *power* with which he was endowed of *working miracles;* which *power*, when the miracles are great and unquestionable, and frequently wrought in public, is one of the highest evidences we can have of the divine mission of any person. And that our Saviour did many wonderful things, is confessed by his greates enemies, *Celsus* and *Julian*, though they attributed them to the power of *magic.*

Q. Of what nature *were our* Saviour's miracles, *and how were they* wrought?

A. He healed all sorts of diseases, in multitudes of people, as they came accidentally without distinction.[g] The manner of curing them was above the ordinary course of nature; for a touch or a word alone produced the cure, and often he cured those at a distance from him. The most inveterate diseases submitted to his power: he restored sight to the man born blind: he made the woman straight that had been crooked and bowed together eighteen years; and the man that had an infirmity thirty-eight years he bids take up his bed and walk.[h] He multiplied a few loaves and fishes for the feeding of some thousands;[i] which miracles were twice done, and at both times many thousands were witnesses of them:[j] and, what all men grant to be miraculous, he raised several persons from the dead, particularly *Lazarus*,[k] after he had been four days in the grave. All these miracles he wrought publicly in the midst of his enemies, and for a long time together, during the whole season of his public ministry, which was about three years and an

d Matt. xvii 5. e 2 Peter i. 16, 17, &c. f John xii. 28. g Matt. iv. 23, 24.
h John iv. 7. Luke xiv. 13. John v. 8. i Matt. xiv. 21. j Matt. xv. 31. k John xi.

half. His miracles, indeed, were so public and so undeniable, that St. *Peter* applies to the *Jews* themselves, declaring,[l] that Jesus *of* Nazareth *was a man approved of God among them by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of them, as they themselves also knew.*

Q. What objections *were made against the* miracles *of our* Saviour?

A. His miracles were of such a description, and wrought in such a manner, and did so plainly prove themselves to be above the power of nature, that none of his enemies attempted to solve them that way; but they attributed them to the power of the devil, *He casteth out devils by* Belzebub, *the prince of the devils.*[m]

Q. How doth it appear that the miracles *of our* Saviour *were not* wrought *by the* power *of the* devil?

A. The miracles of Christ could not be wrought by the power of the devil, because the doctrine of *Christ*, which was confirmed by his miracles, was contrary to that design which the devil carried on in the world, and was destructive of his kingdom. It forbids the worshipping of evil spirits, and draws men off from such wickedness as those evil spirits were delighted with; and, in fact, it appears wherever the Christian religion was entertained, that the worship of demons, and all magical arts were renounced and forsaken, and one God only worshipped. So that it is not to be imagined, that the devil should assist in doing such things as not only brought no profit nor advantage to him, but were the surest instruments of abating his power, and destroying his interest among mankind. This is the force of our Saviour's answer to this objection;[n] *Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city and house divided against itself cannot stand; and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how shall then his kingdom stand?* Besides, there is no proof that the devil can work miracles, except so far as is permitted by God: and it is impious to suppose that God would aid him in a system of imposture.

Q. What was the great miracle *that gave the* utmost evidence *of our Saviour's* divine authority?

A. The conclusive evidence of our Saviour's divine mission was his being raised from the dead the third day. The wit-

[l] Acts ii. 22. [m] Matt. xii 24 [n] Matt. xii. 25, 26.

nesses produced for this matter of fact, were eye-witnesses of it,[o] and were capable of giving their testimony in a matter where nothing but common sense and understanding were required. The action, and all the circumstances of it, are related with the greatest plainness imaginable; they all concur in their testimony, and the greatest sufferings never prevailed upon them to deny or conceal it. And it is not to be imagined, that so many among the first converts to Christianity, who were famous for their learning, and judgment, and inquisitive temper, and who were brought up in the prejudices of a false religion, should have declared themselves worshippers of a crucified Saviour under all worldly disadvantages, if the evidence of our *Saviour's* resurrection, upon the strictest examination, had not appeared in the clearest light, so that there could no doubt remain concerning the truth of it.*

Q. How was the resurrection *of our Saviour an* evidence *of his* divine mission?

A. It fulfilled the prophecy concerning the *Messiah*, that *he should not see corruption;* and it confirmed the truth of what our *Saviour* had asserted in relation to his being the true *Messiah*, and the *Son of God*, agreeably to those expectations which the *Jews* had concerning the *Messiah*. God, by raising him from the dead, did plainly demonstrate to the world, that our *Saviour* was no impostor, and that he did not vainly arrogate to himself those titles of *King of* Israel, and *Son of God*, for which he was crucified and put to death: for if such evidence as this could be given to a deceiver, we should be at a loss ever to distinguish a true prophet.

Q. What evidence *had our* Saviour *besides* miracles *of his being a person* sent *from* God?

A. Christ had the utmost testimony of divine authority by the *spirit of prophecy*, which resided in him, and which was made manifest by the accomplishments of his own predictions; and whenever the predictions have been plain and clear, and the event answerable, it hath always been counted a sure proof of a divine mission; upon which account the angel tells St. *John*,[p] *that the testimony of* Jesus *is the spirit of prophecy.* Thus our Saviour *foretold* his own *death*, with the *manner* of it, and the circumstances of

[o] Romans x. 9. [p] Rev. xix. 10.

* *The evidence of the resurrection* of Christ is more fully exhibited in the chapter on *Easter Sunday.*

his *sufferings;* the *treachery* of *Judas*, the *cowardice* of his *disciples*, and St. *Peter's denying him;* his own *resurrection*, and the *descent* of the *Holy Ghost.*[q] He prophesied of the *destruction* of Jerusalem, which came to pass in forty years after his own death, within the compass of that generation, as he had foretold:[r] the very foundations of the temple and city were destroyed, and the ground ploughed up, so that there was not left *one stone upon another that was not thrown down*, according to our Saviour's prediction. And, indeed, the signs that he foretold should precede the destruction of that city, with the concomitant and subsequent circumstances, exactly agree with that particular and credible history of the fact related by *Josephus*, a *Jew*. Christ assured his disciples that his gospel should be *published in all nations*, and that his religion should prevail against all the opposition of worldly power and malice, and that the *gates of hell should not prevail against it.*[s] The fulfilling of these predictions prove a prophetic spirit in our Saviour, and, consequently, his divine authority.

Q. What evidence *did the* apostles *give of their* divine mission?

A. As witnesses, they justified the credibility of their testimony, in testifying only of such things as they themselves had seen and heard, and in hazarding their lives for this testimony, and sealing it with their blood. And God was pleased to confirm this testimony, by endowing them with the power of working miracles, whereby they spake all languages, healed diseases, cast out devils, foretold things to come, raised the dead. These sensible demonstrations of a divine power gave credit to their testimony among those to whom they were otherwise unknown, and enabled them to establish throughout the earth the pure and self-denying religon of their Master, though it was opposed by the pride, the prejudices, and the power of the world.

Q. Since the proof *of the* Christian religion *to us, in the present age, depends on our being satisfied of the* truth *of the* matters *of* fact *recorded in the* gospel, *what method will you take to prove this point?*

A. There are *four rules*[t] that make it impossible for *matters* of *fact* to be *false*, where they all concur. First, That the *matter* of *fact* be such as that *men's outward senses, their*

[q] Matt. xx. 19. Mark x. 33, 34. Matt. xvi. 21. xxvi. 21, &c. Luke xxiv. Mark xvi. 17, 18. [r] Matt. xxiv. [s] Matt. xxiv. 14. xx. 8. xvi. 18. 49.
[t] *Leslie's Short and Easy* Method with the Deists.

eyes and *ears*, may be *judges* of it. Secondly, That it be done *publicly* in the *face* of the world. Thirdly, That not only *public monuments* be kept in *memory of it*, but that some *outward action* commemorating it should ever afterwards be performed. Fourthly, That such *monuments* and such *actions* or *observances* be *instituted* and do *commence* from the *time* when the *matter* of *fact* was done.

Q. Wherein appear the advantages *of these* rules *for the* proof *of* matters *of* fact?

A. The *two first rules* make it impossible for any such matter of fact to be imposed upon men at the time it was said to be done; because every man's eyes and senses would contradict it. And the *two last rules* make it impossible that any such matter of fact should be invented some time after, and imposed upon the credulity of after ages; because, whenever such matter of fact came to be invented, if not only monuments were said to remain of it, but likewise public actions and observances were said to be constantly used ever since the matter of fact was said to be done, the deceit must be detected by no such monuments appearing, and by the experience of all persons, who must know that no such actions or observances were used by them.

Q. Show how these four rules *meet in the* matters *of* fact *recorded in the* gospel *of our blessed* Saviour.

A. According to the *two first rules*, the matters of fact of the gospel were such of which men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, could *judge*, and were done *publicly* in the face of the world; and thus our *Saviour* argues with his accusers,[s] *I spake openly to the world, and in secret have I said nothing:* And it is related in the *Acts*,[t] that three thousand at one time, and five thousand at another, were converted upon the conviction of what they had seen, what had been done publicly before their eyes, wherein it was impossible to have imposed upon them.[u] According to the *two last rules*, we find *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* were instituted as perpetual memorials of these things, and this at the very time when these things were said to be done; and have been observed, without interruption, in all ages, through the whole Christian world, from that time to the present: And *Christ* himself did ordain apostles and other ministers of his gospel to preach and administer these sacraments, and to govern his Church, and that always unto the end of the world; and they

[s] John xviii. 20. [t] Acts ii. 41. [u] Acts iv. 4.

have accordingly continued to this day. So that if the gospel were a fiction, and invented, as it must be, in some ages after *Christ*, then at that time, when it was first invented, there could be no such sacraments, nor order of clergy, as derived themselves from the institution of *Christ;* which must give the lie to the gospel, and demonstrate the whole to be false: and, therefore, by the *last two rules*, it was as impossible to have imposed upon mankind in this matter, by inventing the gospel in after ages, as at the time when these things were said to be done.

Q. How does the intrinsic evidence *of the* Christian revelation *confirm the* external evidence *that was given to it?*

A. The Christian religion excels all other institutions of religion that ever appeared in the world. It is every way worthy of God, and agreeable to reason. The great fears and doubts of mankind, concerning the way of appeasing the offended justice of God, are removed and satisfied; and the wisdom of God hath so disposed the method of our salvation, that by the sacrifice of the cross, both the dishonour that was done to his justice and holiness is satisfied, and the guilty fears of men relieved. The reward the Christian religion proposes is excellent in itself, lasting in its duration, and plainly revealed. The precepts laid down for the direction of our lives comprehend all virtues, that relate either to God, our neighbour, or ourselves. These should have cleared what was doubtful, by the light of nature, and have made the improvements of it necessary parts of our duty. It supplies us with powerful aid for the performance of our duty; light for our dark minds, strength for our weak resolutions, and courage for all our difficulties: and, above all, it sets before us an exact and perfect pattern for our instruction and encouragement. So that the Christian revelation itself, as well as the external evidence, proves its divine original.

Q. Wherein appears the great guilt *of those that* reject *the* Christian revelation?

A. They who reject the Christian revelation resist the utmost evidence that any religion is capable of receiving, both from its *intrinsic value*, and from that *external attestation* that God has been pleased to give it by *miracles* and *prophecies;* and, consequently, by this act, they condemn themselves, because they reject the only means of their salvation.

Note. For the prayer see the end of the volume.

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS

CONCERNING

THE CHURCH,

Its nature as a Society, the Form of its Ministry, the Extent of its Powers, and the Limits of our Obedience

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Q. DOES *it not appear from scripture that the Church is* a well-formed regular society?

A. It appears from scripture that the *Christian Church* is not a confused multitude of men, independent one on another, but a *well-formed and regular society.* It is called a *family*, whereof Christ is the master, of *whom the whole family is named.*[x] It is said to be the *city of the living God*;[y] whence Christian people are *fellow-citizens with the saints.*[z] And it is often mentioned as a *kingdom*, of which *Christ* is the *king:* Thus, in our Lord's words, *Thou art* Peter, and upon *this rock I will build my Church, and I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven;*[a] where the *Church* and the *Kingdom of Heaven* mean the same thing. As a *family*, a *city*, and a *kingdom*, are societies, and the *Christian Church* is represented by them, that must likewise be a *society.*

Q. Is not the Christian Church a society founded by God, *and are not all men* obliged to become members of it?

A. The Christian Church is not a mere *voluntary* society; but one whereof men are *obliged to be members*, as they value their everlasting happiness: for it is a *society appointed by God*, with enforcements of *rewards and punishments.* That it is of *God's appointment* is certain; for it is *the Church of the living God.*[b] That it is enforced with *rewards* and *punish-*

x Eph. iii. 14, 15. y Heb. xii. 22. z Eph. ii. 19. a Matt. xvi. 18, 19
b 1 Tim. iii. 15.

ments is not less certain: for remission of sins, the grace of the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, are declared to be the privileges of the Christian Church, and annexed to baptism, the constant rite of initiation into the Church; *Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins,* and *ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*[c] And the consequence of neglecting to hear Christ and his apostles may be understood from *Matthew* x. 14. *Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for that city.* Now, as God, by instituting this society, and annexing such rewards and punishments, has sufficiently declared his will, that men should enter into it, all men are *obliged to become members of it;* and it can in no other sense be called a voluntary society, than as it is left to every man's choice, whether he will be for ever happy or miserable.

Q. Is not the Christian Church a spiritual *society?*

A. The Christian Church is a *spiritual* society. It was founded in *opposition* to the *kingdom* of *darkness.* This is plainly implied in our blessed *Saviour's* words to St. *Peter: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall never prevail against it.*[d] Whence the members of the *Christian* Church are said to be *delivered out of the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of Christ.*[e] And the *Christian* people, as *soldiers* under *Christ,* are said to *fight, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*[f] Their *armour* is not such as will guard them against *carnal,* but *spiritual enemies;* it is the armour of light,[g] *the armour of God, the girdle of truth, the breast-plate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit.*[h] And this *spiritual* Society, or *Kingdom of Christ,* was, by the design of its Great Founder, to be distinct from all *earthly kingdoms. My kingdom* says Christ, *is not of this world:*[i] for as *earthly kingdoms* are designed for men's *temporal* welfare, so the end of this *heavenly kingdom* is to promote our *everlasting* happiness.

c Acts ii. 38. d Matt. xvi. 18. e Col. i. 13. f Col. ii. 14, 15. g Rom. xiii. 12
h Eph. vi. 13. i John xviii. 36.

Q. Is not the Christian Church *an* outward *and* visible *society?*

A. It is an *outward* and *visible* society. The name of Church is constantly applied in the Scriptures to such a society. Thus we find it used by our blessed Saviour himself: *Tell it to the Church. If he neglect to hear the Church:*[j] It is compared to a *marriage feast*, to a *sheepfold*, to a *net full of fishes*, to a *field of corn*, &c. by which allusions the society of *Christians*, which is the idea implied in the name of *Church*, is evidently described as a *visible* body of men, taken out of and separated from the rest of the world. Public *rulers* were appointed to govern the Church, the *faith* was to be publicly confessed, the public *worship* of God to be frequented, and *visible* sacraments to be received by all the members of it; and consequently the *Christian* Church is an *outward* and *visible* society.

Q. Is not the Christian Church *an* universal *society?*

A. It is an *universal* society, both with regard to *place* and with regard to *time*. With regard to *place;* for Christ's commission to his apostles was, *to preach the Gospel to every creature,*[k] *and to teach and baptize all nations:*[l] and with regard to *time;* for it is prophesied concerning Christ's kingdom, that it shall *be established for ever, as the sun and moon throughout all generations;*[m] and we are told by St. *Paul*, that *Christ must reign, till all his enemies, the last* of which is *death*, shall be *put under his feet,*[n] which cannot be till the general resurrection; and he himself has promised to be *with* his apostles and their successors *always, even unto the end of the world.*[o]

Q. Must there not be, of necessity, officers *in the* Christian Church?

A. Since no well regulated society ever did or can subsist without *officers* to govern it, and without some subordination among these, and since it appears that the Christian Church is a regular society, it must, of necessity, have its *officers*. And as this society is to be continued by a succession of believers to the world's end, it follows, that there must be an uninterrupted succession of *officers* till that time. And as it is a society of God's institution, the *officers* of it must receive their commission from *him*.

Q. Prove that there are officers *appointed in the Christian Church.*

j Matt. xviii. 17. *k* Mark xvi. 15. *l* Matt. xxviii. 19. *m* Psalm lxxii. 5. *n* 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. *o* Matt. xxviii. 20.

a Matt. xxvi. 28.
b Acts xx. 28.

sers of his holy word and sacraments, the *messengers* and *embassadors* of Heaven. These characters ascribed to them in Holy Scripture sufficiently demonstrate the dignity of their function, and are a plain argument, that *none but God himself* can give them their commission.

Q. State another argument to prove the necessity of a divine commission, *drawn from the constant practice among the Jews.*

A. The apostle makes the calling of *Aaron* the pattern of all other ministers in the Jewish and Christian Church. *No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* *Aaron* and his sons, and the Levites were consecrated by the express command of God to *Moses*, and they had all of them their *distinct commission* from Heaven, and no less than *death* was the penalty of invading their office.[x] Christian ministers must also have an external commission. They must be appointed by God as *those* were, and therefore it can be no less sacrilege to usurp their office.

Q. Does not the example of our Saviour also prove that no one ought to exercise the office of a minister in the Church of God without a divine commission?

A. Our Saviour *glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee.*[y] Though our Saviour wanted no gift to qualify him for this office, as having the *Divine nature* inseparably united to his *human*, yet he would not enter upon his office till he was externally commissioned thereunto by the visible descent of the Holy Ghost upon him, and an *audible voice* from Heaven, proclaiming him to be the Messiah. From all which it is evident, that no one ought to exercise the office of a minister in the Church of God without a divine commission: and that as the officers of the Christian Church, *Bishops*, *Priests*, and *Deacons*, were appointed by God, this, like every other Divine institution, must remain in the same state till it shall please God to change or wholly lay it aside; for men may with the same reason abolish the sacraments of the Church, and all other Christian institutions, as pretend that the functions of Church officers are mutable and temporary.

Q. Is there not a subordination *among the officers of the Christian Church?*

x *Numb. iii. 10.* y Heb. v. 5.

A. That there is a *subordination* among the officers of the Christian Church, is evident from Scripture. For the commission of the *seventy* was more limited than that of the *twelve*. And as the *apostles* and *disciples* were subject to *Christ*, so were the *elders* and *deacons* to the *apostles*. St. *Paul* sends to *Miletus*, and calls thither the elders of *Ephesus*, to whom he gives a most solemn charge; which is a manifest sign that they were under his government.[z] And at *Corinth*, where several prophets and evangelists were then present, the same apostle, being absent, both excommunicates, and absolves, and enacts laws. *Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the rest judge.*[a] *If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge,* that *the things which I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*[b] And, in like manner, *Timothy*, by virtue of the authority conferred on him by the imposition of St. *Paul's* hands, ruled the whole Church of *Ephesus*, *officers* as well as private Christians. Whence it is manifest, that as the Christian Church was governed by the three orders of *apostles* or *bishops*, *priests*, and *deacons*, so the supreme authority was lodged in the superior order of the *apostles* or *bishops*, from whom the *priests* and *deacons* derived their power, and without whose consent they could not lawfully perform any religious act.

Q. From whom is all authority in the Church originally derived?

A. The original of all ecclesiastical authority is from God the Father, by whom our Lord was sent into the world to mediate between God and man, as he himself witnesseth. *As thou hast sent me into the world,* saith he to the Father, *even so have I also sent them into the world;*[c] and to his apostles, *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*[d] God the *Father* hath given unto the *Son*, in the capacity of mediator, *all power in Heaven and Earth*, and hath constituted him the *head of the body, the Church. Jesus Christ the Son* is now the *source of all authority* in the Church, and will continue its supreme head until the final consummation of the work of redemption.

Q. By whom is this ecclesiastical authority immediately conferred?

A. The person by whom ecclesiastiacal power is imme-

z Acts xx. 17, &c. a 1 Cor. xiv. 29. b 1 Cor. xiv. 36, 37. c John xvii. 18. d John xx. 21.

diately conferred, is the *Holy Spirit*, the third person in the blessed and undivided Trinity. He it was, by whose anointing our *Lord* was invested with his mediatorial office. Whence he is said to have *preached by the Spirit*;[e] *through the Holy Spirit he gave commandments to the apostles whom he had chosen*:[f] *By the Spirit of God he cast out devils. Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself to God.*[g] And the authority and special grace, whereby the *apostles* and all *Church-officers* execute their respective functions, are in the same manner ascribed to the Spirit. This was expressed in the very form of the apostles' ordination, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained:*[h] where the authority to remit and retain sins is made a consequence of their receiving the Holy Ghost. And St. *Paul* ascribes to the same Spirit both the offices of the apostles and other ministers, and their abilities to discharge those offices.[i] So that all ecclesiastical authority is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Q. Since God does not now give any miraculous call to the ministerial office, what persons has he entrusted *with authority to ordain ministers in his Church?*

A. If we may be allowed to reason from the constitution and universal practice of civil societies, we must conclude, that the power of *ordaining* ministers belongs to the *Bishops*, who are the chief governors of the Church, because the power of constituting subordinate magistrates belongs to the supreme governors of all civil societies: and it is contradictory to reason, that they who exercise any authority, whether in the church or in the state, should derive their authority from any but those in whom the supreme authority is lodged. Accordingly, we find in the Gospel, that whilst our *Lord* lived on earth, he reserved the power of *ordaining* ministers to himself. He gave the *apostles* and the *seventy disciples* a commission to preach, but never allowed them, while he continued among them, to communicate that commission to any other. Afterwards, when the apostles were the chief visible governors of the Church, they ordained *Ministers*. All the *Apostles* together ordained the seven *Deacons* in the Church of *Jerusalem*:[j] *Paul* and *Barnabas ordained Elders in every Church* which they

[e] Luke iv. 18. [f] Acts i. 2. [g] Heb. ix. 14. [h] John xx. 22, 23.
[i] 1 Cor. xii. 1, 31. Eph. iv. 7, 8, 11. [j] Acts vi. 3, 7.

visited.[k] In the same age, this authority was exercised by others whom the apostles had *ordained* to be chief governors of Churches. *Timothy* and *Titus ordained* ministers in their respective diocesses of *Ephesus* and *Crete*. That no inferior *order* had this power is evident. St. *Paul* tells *Titus*, that *for this cause* he *left* him in *Crete*, that he might *ordain Elders in every city*.[l] But this could be no cause of leaving him there, if the *Presbyters* or *Elders* had the power of ordination lodged in them: for that island had been converted to Christianity long before this epistle was written, and before *Titus* came thither: and no doubt there were *many Presbyters* among them. The same may be said of *Timothy's* being sent to *Ephesus*. He would not certainly have been sent thither to ordain persons to the ministry if the Presbyters there before had possessed that power.

Q. But do not the words Bishop *and* Presbyter *in the New Testament sometimes denote the* same office?

A. On the subject of the officers of the Church the question is not so much in regard to the *names* of these officers, as to the *distinction* and *subordination* among the *officers* themselves. It is granted that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in the New Testament were used as names for the same office, generally that which we now call the order of priests. But it has been proved that in the days of the Apostles there were *three orders* in the Church, with distinct powers. For example, in the Church at Ephesus, there were *Timothy the superior*, *Bishops or Presbyters* subject to his superintendence, and the order of *Deacons*. There were Bishops or Presbyters in it before Timothy was fixed there, as we learn from Acts xx. If those Bishops or Presbyters had the power of ordination or government in their hands, it would not have been necessary to set Timothy over that Church, in order to exercise these very powers. The fact is, that, during the lives of the apostles, the three orders of the ministry were distinguished by the names of *Apostles*, *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, and *Deacons*. After the death of the apostles, their successors in the first order of the ministry, not choosing to retain the name which, by way of eminence, had been applied to the twelve, took the name of *Bishops*, which was never afterwards applied to *the second* order of the ministry, but was considered as the

k Acts xiv. 23 l Titus i. 5

appropriate name of the *first* order. Theodoret says expressly, "that in process of time, those who succeeded to the Apostolic office, left the name of Apostle to the Apostles, strictly so called, and gave the name of Bishop to those who succeeded to the Apostolic office." Thus the *name* of *Bishop*, and that of *Elder* or *Presbyter*, which were promiscuously used for the same office in Scripture, came to be *distinct* in the ecclesiastical use of words, as the *offices* were from the beginning. *Bishops*, as they are distinct from *Presbyters*, do not derive their succession from those who are promiscuously called in the New Testament, *Bishops* or *Elders*, but from the *Apostles* themselves, and their successors, such as Timothy, Titus, Sylvanus, Epaphroditus, and others.

Q. But is there not a passage in St. Paul's charge to Timothy, which implies that Presbyters *had the power of* ordination?

A. It is true that St. Paul charges Timothy (1 Tim. iv. 14.) "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, *with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.*" But in his second epistle (2 Tim. i. 6.) St. Paul charges him, "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, *by the putting on of* my *hands.*" It appears, therefore, that St. *Paul ordained* Timothy with the *concurrence* of the *Presbytery.* By the Presbytery may be understood a number of Apostles, who laid their hands on Timothy, since the Apostles, though certainly superior to Presbyters, style themselves "Elders"[m] or Presbyters. The Greek expositors[n] understood the passage in this sense as well as the Greek Church, both ancient and modern: for in the ordinations of this Church, the Presbyters do not lay on their hands with the Bishop. Nor was it the custom in the Western Church, until the fourth century. But, allowing that by the Presbytery is meant a number of Presbyters, it is evident, from a comparison of the two texts, that the Presbyters imposed hands not to *convey authority*, but merely to *express approbation.* "*By* the putting on of *my* hands," "*with* the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." In the Church of England, and in the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Presbyters lay on their hands with the Bishops in ordination, not to convey authority, but merely to denote concurrence.

[m] 1 Peter v. 1. 3 John i. 1. [n] Chrysostom Theophylact.

Q. Ought not the testimony of the primitive fathers to be admitted on the subject of the constitution of the Christian Church?

A. The *sincerity* and *piety* of the fathers, some of whom lived in the days of the Apostles, have never been disputed. Whatever, therefore, may be the confidence we may think proper to place in the *opinions* which as individuals they advance, their *credibility* as *witnesses* of *matters of fact*, such as the doctrines which *universally* prevailed in the primitive Church, its *constitution*, and the *orders* of its *ministry*, cannot be contested.* If then it appear from their writings, that *Episcopacy* universally prevailed in the *primitive ages;* that there were three orders of the ministry constituted by *Christ* and *his Apostles*, viz. *Bishops*, *Priests*, and *Deacons;* that the first order alone possessed the *power* of *ordination* and *supreme authority* in the Church; this testimony of the fathers, united with the arguments already adduced from scripture, will constitute an unanswerable proof that *Episcopacy* is founded on *divine authority.*

Q. Is there any writer contemporary with the Apostles who gives unequivocal testimony in favour of Episcopacy?

A. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who lived in the days of the Apostles, affords the following decided testimony in favour of *Episcopal government*, and the authority of *Bishops* as distinct from *Presbyters* and *Deacons.* In his epistle to the Magnesians: "It will therefore behove you with all sincerity *to obey your Bishop*, in honour of him whose pleasure it is that *ye should do so.*" In his epistle to the Trallians: "*Continue inseparable* from Jesus Chirst our God, and *from your Bishop:* and from the commands of the Apostles. He that is *within the altar* is pure: but he that is *without*, that is, does any thing *without the Bishop* and *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, is not pure in his conscience." In his epistle to the Philadelphians: "The Lord forgives all that repent, if they return to the unity of God, and to *the council of the Bishop.*" In his epistle to the Smyrneans: "*Follow your Bishop* as Jesus Christ the Father, and the *Presbytery* as the Apostles. As for the *Deacons*, reverence them as the command of God. *Let no man do any thing of what belongs to the Church without the Bishop.* Let that eucharist be looked upon as firm

* The credibility of the fathers as *witnesses* to *matters of fact*, and the *force of their authority* in deciding *points of controversy*, are ably vindicated by Reeves, in his Dissertation on the Right use of the Fathers, prefixed to his translation of the Apologies of Justin, Tertullian, &c.

and just which is *either offered by the Bishop*, or by him to whom *the Bishop has given his consent. Wheresoever the Bishop shall appear, there let the people also be:* As where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not lawful *without the Bishop*, neither to baptize, nor to celebrate the holy communion: But whatsoever he shall approve of, that is also pleasing unto God." His epistles abound with other passages to the same effect. From this unequivocal testimony it fully appears, that in the *Apostolic age* there were three orders of the ministry, Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, *distinct* and *subordinate*, deriving their *commission from God*, and claiming the *reverence* and *obedience* of the people; that the *Bishops* were at the *head* of the Churches; that through them *ministerial authority* was conveyed; and that *without the Bishop*, that is, *without power derived from him, it was not lawful* to perform any ecclesiastical act.*

Q. But has it not been asserted that in the Apostolic age, the authority of a Bishop was confined to a single congregation?

A. The assertion has been made, but without the shadow of foundation, that in the Apostolic age the authority of a Bishop was confined to a single congregation. It is indeed absurd to suppose, that, in the large cities of Jerusalem, Antioch, &c. where many thousands were converted to Christianity,[o] all these believers constituted one congregation, and met together in *one place* for the purpose of worship. Yet this must have been the case, if a Bishop was originally the head of only a single congregation, since in each of these cities there was but one Bishop, St. James being Bishop of Jerusalem, and Ignatius of Antioch. The same remarks may be applied to the Churches in other cities, over which there were Bishops constituted. Each Church undoubtedly consisted of several congregations, subject to one Bishop, who had under him Presbyters and Deacons. So that, in the primitive age, every Bishop was the head of a *diocess*, con-

* The testimony of Ignatius is so express and decided in support of Episcopacy, of the superiority of Bishops to Presbyters, and of their being the only constituted source of authority in the Church, that some persons have attempted to disprove the genuineness of these epistles. It is certain, however, that Polycarp and Irenæus in the second century, Origen in the third, Eusebius, Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Jerome in the fourth, with a great number of writers down to the fifteenth century, all bear witness to these epistles. Their genuineness has been fully vindicated by Archbishop Wake and Bishop Pearson. For a concise but satisfactory statement of the proofs of the genuineness of these celebrated epistles, the reader is referred to Dr. Bowden's two letters to Dr. Stiles, of Yale College, and particularly to the second letter.

o Acts ii. 41. v. 14. iv. 4. vi. 7. xxi. 20. xi. 19. v. 21—27.

sisting of several separate congregations, and not merely of a *parish* consisting of a single congregation of Christians.*

Q. What evidence does the second century afford on the subject of Episcopacy?

A. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, who lived about seventy years from the Apostolic age, expressly asserts, that in his time there were Bishops in all Churches, who acted with Apostolic authority, and succeeded in a direct line from the Apostles. "We can reckon up those whom the *Apostles ordained* to be *Bishops* in the several Churches, and who they were that *succeeded* them down to our own times. They (*the Apostles*) desired to have those in all things perfect and unreprovable, whom they left to be *their successors*, and to whom they *committed their own Apostolic authority.*"[p] *Clemens of Alexandria* thus designates the three orders. Summing up the duties of Christians contained in *scripture*, he adds, "There are other precepts without number: some which relate to *Presbyters;* others which belong to *Bishops;* others respecting *Deacons.*"[q] *Tertullian*, who lived near the end of the second century, in his treatise of baptism, affirms, "That the power of baptizing is lodged in the Bishops, and that it may also be exercised by Presbyters and Deacons, but not without the *Bishops commission.*"[r] This passage is a full evidence of the *superiority of Bishops* over the *two lower orders*, these being not allowed to exercise even the lowest function in the Church without the Bishop's permission.

Q. What evidence do the writers of the third century afford on the subject of the government of the Church?

A. Origen, a Catechist and Presbyter of the Church of Alexandria, who lived in the beginning of the third century, in his explanation of the Lord's Prayer, on the words, "Forgive our debts," uses these words: "Besides these general debts, there is a debt due to widows who are maintained by the Church; another to *Deacons;* another to *Presbyters;* and another to *Bishops;* which is the *greatest of all*, and *exacted by the Saviour of the whole Church*, who will severely punish the non-payment of it." Thus, according to the testimony of *Origen*, *Bishops were superior to Presbyters* and

* The scheme of parochial Episcopacy is advocated by Sir Peter King. But the unfairness of the quotations from the primitive writers by which he attempts to support his scheme, and the fallacy of his reasonings on the primitive government of the Church, are fully exposed by *Slater*, in his *Original Draught of the Primitive Church.*

p Irenæus, lib. iii. cap. 5. q Pædag. lib. iii. cap. 12. r Lib. de Bap. cap. 17
s Origen on Prayer.

Deacons, by the *appointment of Christ*. St. *Cyprian*, the famous Bishop of Carthage, who flourished in this century, affords, in his writings, the most full and unequivocal proofs of the divine institution of the Episcopal office, and of the *subordination* of *Deacons* and *Presbyters* to their *Bishops*. The following passages, among *many others* that might be selected, are express on the subject: "Our *Lord* intending to *establish* the *Episcopal dignity*, together with the *constitution of his Church*, says thus to Peter: "I say unto thee, that *thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall never prevail against it.*" Thence in the *course of times and successions*, the *ordination* of *Bishops*, and the constitution of the Church proceeds: so that the *Church is built on the Bishops*, and all *acts* of the Church are *governed and directed* by them its *Presidents.*"[t] "The *Deacons* ought no more to attempt any thing against *Bishops, by whom Deacons are made*, than Deacons should do against *God, who makes Bishops.*"[u] In his absence, and without his consent, some of his *Presbyters* would have restored to the Church's communion some who had lapsed in the time of persecution. On this occasion he tells his Presbyters: "What a dreadful prospect must we have of the Divine vengeance, when some of the *Presbyters*, neither mindful of the *Gospel*, nor of their own station; neither regarding the future judgment of God, nor the *Bishop that now presides over them*, dare arrogate entirely to themselves, what was never attempted under any of my predecessors."[v] *Eusebius*, the celebrated ecclesiastical historian of this century, derives the Bishops of all Churches from the Apostles, and gives the succession of Bishops in all the principal cities of the Roman empire, from the Apostles down to his own time.

Q. Is not a similar account of the constitution of the Christian Church given by the writers of succeeding centuries?

A. It would be easy to continue this account of the *government of the Church* by *Bishops* through all succeeding ages to this time; but it being *universally* acknowledged, even by the professed enemies of Episcopacy, that the Church was governed by *Bishops* of a *superior order* to *mere Presbyters* after the *third century*, it is needless to adduce any more testimonies on this subject.

Q. But does not St. Jerome assert the original parity of Bishops and Presbyters?

t Cypriani principio Epist. 33. u Epist 3. v Epist. 16.

A. St. *Jerome*, who was a Presbyter in the Church in the fourth century, was displeased at the Bishop of Jerusalem, who, he thought, exercised authority with undue severity; and he was also offended with the Deacons for their insolent attempts to advance themselves to an equality with Presbyters. Under a strong anxiety, therefore, to magnify as much as possible the office of a *Presbyter*, he hazards the following *conjecture:* "That the Churches were at first governed by common councils of Presbyters. But when divisions arose from this parity among the Presbyters, when every Presbyter began to claim as his own particular subjects those whom he had baptized, and it was said by the people, *I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I am of Cephas;* to remedy this evil, it was decreed all the world over, that one of the Presbyters in every Church should be set over the rest, and peculiarly called *Bishop;* and that the chief care of the Church should be committed to him."[w] But even this *conjecture* of St. Jerome, which is not only unsupported, but contradicted by the testimony of all the primitive writers, so far from militating against Episcopacy, proves that it was his opinion that Episcopacy was instituted by the Apostles; for since he refers the advancement of Bishops above Presbyters to the time when it was said, *I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas*, which was *the time of St. Paul.* When St. Jerome delivers his *unbiassed* and *dispassionate* sentiments, he holds the same language on the subject of Episcopacy with the other primitive writers. "What *Aaron*, his *sons the priests*, and the *Levites* were in the *temple*, the same are *Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons* in the Church."[x] "Wheresoever a Bishop is, whether at Rome or Eugubium, at Constantinople or at Rhegium, at Alexandria or at Tani, he has the same merit and the same Priesthood: neither the power of riches, nor the humility of poverty makes a Bishop higher or lower, but *they are all successors of the Apostles.*"[y]

Q. But may not the Bishops have usurped this superior power over the other orders of the ministry?

A. No supposition can be more absurd and improbable than that the Bishops usurped their superior powers. That there was originally no distinction of office or prerogative between Bishops and Presbyters, but that a set of designing and ambitious Presbyters usurped authority over the rest of

w Hieron. Com. ad Tit. cap. 1. 7. Epist. ad Evag. x Epist. ad Evag. y Ibid.

their brethren; that this usurpation should take place, and yet the degraded Presbyters make no resistance, and enter no protest against this daring invasion of their rights; that the whole Christian world should, in the space of a few years, submit to the unjust authority of these usurping Bishops; that this fundamental revolution should take place in the Church, and no accounts of it be given by any ecclesiastical writers, are suppositions which common sense would immediately reject, even if they were not refuted by the decided and universal testimony of primitive writers, in favour of Episcopacy, as the original constitution of the Church.

Q. Does it not appear necessary from the constitution of the Church, as thus established, that the Episcopal succession from the Apostles should be uninterrupted?

A. As a divine commission[2] is required to qualify any one to exercise the priestly office, there must be a succession of persons authorized from Christ to send others to act in his name, or there can be no authority in his Church. For if that succession which conveys a divine commission for the ministry be broken, people must either go into the ministry of their own accord, or be sent by those who received no power to send them. And it is surely evident that those persons cannot be called ministers of Christ, be considered as his ambassadors, be authorized to proclaim the testimony of his salvation, or to administer his sacraments, who never received a commission from him. As, therefore, it has been proved that a divine commission to exercise the ministry was to be conveyed through the order of Bishops, it is necessary that the Episcopal succession, from the days of the Apostles, should be uninterrupted. The divine Head of the Church has pledged himself to preserve the succession of his ministry "to the end of the world." There is not the slightest evidence for believing that the succession has been interrupted: its interruption seems indeed morally impossible. For it has been the universal practice of the Church, from the time of the Apostles to the present day, to receive none for Bishops who were not ordained by other Bishops. The consecration of Bishops was always a public solemn act, of which there were many witnesses; and, in disputed cases, it would be easy to discover whether a person claiming to be Bishop had received a proper commission. The received doctrine in every age of the Church, that no ordination was valid but that of

[2] The necessity of a divine commission has been proved page 22, 23.

Bishops, has been a constant guard upon the Episcopal succession. It is in the highest degree absurd, therefore, to suppose that any person could ever have been permitted to succeed to the Episcopal office, who was not duly commissioned. Nor does it invalidate this succession, that the divine commission to exercise the ministry has been sometimes conveyed through corrupt and wicked men; since, in the language of our Church, in her twenty-sixth article; "Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometime the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments; yet, forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their ministry," &c.

Q. But though it be granted, that in the apostolic age Bishops alone possessed the power of ordination, does it follow that this is a permanent institution, and cannot be changed?

A. That Episcopacy, as established by Christ and his Apostles, is not a mutable, but a permanent institution, designed to continue in the Church "till the end of the world," is evident from the very nature of it. It is the instituted mode of conveying a divine commission to exercise authority in Christ's Church; and, consequently, if you alter the instituted mode of conveying this commission, you lose the commission itself. If Christ is the source of all authority in the Church; if he conferred the power of conveying the priesthood on the Apostles, that through them it might be transmitted in the Church to the end of the world; if they constituted as their successors in this power of conveying the ministry, an order of men distinct from, and superior to those called Presbyters and Deacons, (and all these facts appear from the united testimony of Scripture and the primitive fathers of the Church,) the conclusion is certain and irresistible, that no change can be made by any human authority in this mode of conveying the ministry. If Presbyters or Deacons, or Laymen, should assume the power of ordination, the authority of the persons ordained by them would rest on human institution, and therefore in the Church, where a divine commission is necessary to the exercise of the ministry, their acts would be nugatory and invalid. "All power was given unto Christ in heaven and in earth." "He is the Head of the body the Church." All authority in his

Church must therefore be derived from him; and the means which were originally instituted by him and his inspired Apostles, for conveying this authority through all successive ages, cannot be changed or interrupted. The moment this change or interruption is made, human authority usurps the place, in the Church, of divine.

Q. What do you mean by Episcopacy?

A. Episcopacy is the divine constitution of the ministry, in the orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, with their appropriate powers; the order of Bishops possessing exclusively the power of ordination, of superintendence, and of supremacy in government.

Q. What do you mean by Episcopal government?

A. Episcopal government is a general term, including the orders of the ministry; but extending to other offices instituted by the Church; to the mode, by which her ministers are vested with jurisdiction; and to the particular organization of her legislative, executive, and judiciary powers. As these latter things are left to human expediency, and may be ordered differently in different Churches, it is not proper to speak of the divine institution of Episcopal government. Episcopacy, or the three orders of the ministry alone, with their subordinate and appropriate powers, are of divine institution.

Q. State then the argument which proves that Episcopacy was not merely a form of government suited to the particular circumstances of the primitive Church, but that it was designed to be a permanent and unchangeable institution.

A. The Christian ministry is a divine, positive institution, which, as it could only begin by the divine appointment, so it can only descend to after ages in such a method as God has been pleased to appoint. Now, as Episcopacy is the method which was at first instituted for continuing the ministry, therefore Episcopacy is unchangeable. The apostolic practice shows that Episcopacy is the order that is appointed for conveying the ministry; but it is the nature of the ministry which proves that Episcopacy is unalterable. The office of the ministry is of no significancy but as it is of divine appointment, and rests on a divine commission, for the conveyance of which Episcopacy was the mode appointed. The continuance of the commission, therefore, and of course the authority of the ministry, depends upon the continuance of the mode appointed to convey it. So that the question is not

fairly stated, when it is asked, whether Episcopacy, as being an apostolic practice, may not be laid aside? But, whether an instituted particular method of conveying the ministry be not necessary to be continued? Whether an appointed order of receiving a commission from God be not necessary to be observed in order to receive a commission from him? If the case were thus stated, any one would soon perceive that we can no more lay aside Episcopacy, and yet continue the Christian ministry, than we can alter the terms of salvation, and yet be in covenant with God.*

Q. State the general result from the foregoing view of the constitution of the Church.

A. From the foregoing view of the constitution of the Church it results, that the Church is a visible society, regular and well organized, spiritual and distinct from the world; that the Christian ministry, exercising powers that are purely spiritual, can derive its authority only from God; that, therefore, it is necessary that some mode should be instituted for successively conveying, through all ages, the divine authority which at first instituted the ministry; that Christ, as the supreme Head of the Church, sent his Apostles, "as the Father had sent him," the instructors, priests, and rulers of the Church; that the gracious promise which he made them, evidently implied that the authority with which he invested them was transmissive, and to be continued, through their successors, "to the end of the world;" that from the concurrent evidence of the Scripture and primitive writers, the first order of the ministry, called Bishops, were successors to the Apostles in the Divine authority of commissioning others for the ministry, and governing the Church; and that, therefore, it is only through a succession of Bishops, as distinct from, and superior to Presbyters and Deacons, that authority to exercise the ministry can be derived from the divine Head of the Church.

* The argument is here stated nearly in the words of the celebrated divine, W. Law, and is a conclusive answer to the conjectural opinion of Archdeacon Paley, that the primitive constitution of the Church was merely adapted to the circumstances of the age, and was not designed to be unalterably binding under future circumstances. Law's three letters to Hoadly, then Bishop of Bangor, (published in the Scholar Armed,) contain one of the most complete and rational vindications of Episcopacy, and the authority of the Church, which have ever appeared. They are written by the hand of a master, with the bold animation of a man who feels that he advocates the truth. In language delicate, yet severe and pointed, by reasoning cogent and irresistible, he exposes the dangerous errors of his adversary, detects the fallacy of his arguments, and drives him humbled from the strong holds in which he fancied himself secure. They are the most able productions of Law, and discover a manly and vigorous mind, which unfortunately too much abstraction and solitude afterwards enervated

Q. Having thus established the nature of the Church, and the officers by whom its powers are to be exercised, we proceed to consider the nature of those powers. Does the Church claim any civil authority?

A. The powers of the Church are entirely spiritual, and relate wholly to the next world. Our Lord himself wholly disclaimed all civil power, and left the civil rights of mankind in the same state wherein he found them. And when the Apostle exhorts the Hebrews to yield obedience to their pastors, he restrains it to the affairs of their souls, for which their pastors were accountable to God: *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account.*[a]

Q. What are the powers that belong to the Church?

A. The powers that belong to the Church may be reduced under the following heads, viz. The power, 1. Of preaching; 2. Of prayer; 3. Of baptism; 4. Of celebrating the Lord's Supper; 5. Of confirming persons baptized; 6. Of ordaining ministers; 7. Of making canons; 8. Of excommunication; 9. Of demanding maintenance.

Q. By whom is the power of preaching which belongs to the Christian Church to be exercised?

A. None have a right to preach without a commission; for *how shall they preach except they be sent?*[b] Our Lord himself was sent and commissioned by the Father to preach the gospel,[c] and this was one of the functions to which he was anointed by the Holy Spirit. In like manner he solemnly called and set apart his Apostles to this office,[d] and gave them commission to teach all nations.[e] And this branch of the apostolic office, viz. preaching the gospel, was derived to their successors the Bishops; hence St. Paul charges Timothy to preach the word,[f] and one previous qualification required of such as were to be ordained Bishops, is, that they be apt to teach.[g] But this power was not confined to the Bishops, or superior order of ministers in the Church, for the Apostle calls the Presbyters his fellow-labourers, that is, his associates in preaching the gospel; and Philip, who was only a Deacon, preached the word in Samaria. All the different orders exercised this function; the Bishops, as invested with the plenitude of power; the Priests and Deacons, by an authority derived from them.

[a] Heb xiii. 17. [b] Rom. x. 14, 15. [c] Luke iv. 18. [d] Mark iii. 14 vi 7
[e] Matt xxviii. 19. [f] 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. [g] 1 Tim. iii. 2.

Q. By whom is public prayer to be performed?

A. In secret, every man is his own orator; and in private families, performance of divine worship is incumbent on them to whom the care and government of the family belong; but in the public congregations of Christians, divine worship must be celebrated only by those to whom it has pleased God to commit this office. The presenting of the people's prayers to God, and interceding with him to bless them, has always been reckoned an essential part of the office of the ministry. The Apostles join the offices of preaching and prayer together: *We*, say they, *will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*[h] St. James directs sick persons to send for the Presbyters of the Church to pray and intercede for them,[i] that their sins may be forgiven. And the twenty-four Elders, in the Revelation, who represent the ministers of the Christian Church, have every one of them golden vials full of incense, which is the prayers of the saints.[j]

Q. To whom is the power of admitting members into the Church by baptism committed?

A. Our Lord gave the power of administering baptism to his Apostles just before his ascension: *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them.*[k] Yet was it never understood to be so strictly appropriated to them, but that it might lawfully be exercised by inferior ministers. For we find that Philip, the Deacon, baptized the Samaritans and the Ethiopian eunuch.[l] Hence, though the power of baptism belongs chiefly and primarily to the Bishops, yet it belongs also to the Presbyters, who are the Bishops' assistants in the care and government of the Church; and may lawfully be committed to Deacons; but neither Presbyters nor Deacons baptize but in subordination to the Bishop.

Q. By whom is the power of consecrating the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, to be exercised?

A. The first Eucharist was consecrated by our Lord himself, a little before his passion. At the same time he gave his Apostles commission to do as he had done; *Do this*, said he, *in remembrance of me.*[m] Yet this office was not so strictly appropriated to the Apostles, but that it might be lawfully executed by the ministers of the second order; whence we find, that the Eucharist was consecrated in the Church of

h Acts vi. 4. i James v. 14. j Rev. v. 8.
k Matt xxviii. 19. l Acts viii. m Luke xxii. 19.

Corinth, when no minister above the order of Presbyters, who were next below the Apostles, was there.

Q. Why were not Deacons allowed to consecrate the Lord's Supper?

A. The reason why Deacons were not allowed to consecrate the Lord's Supper was, because this sacrament was always believed to succeed in the place of sacrifices; and as none beside the high priest, and inferior priests, were permitted to offer sacrifices under the Jewish law, so none but Bishops and Presbyters, who alone are priests in the Christian sense of that name, consecrated the Lord's Supper.

Q. What was the original of the power which the Church possesses of Confirmation, or imposing hands on persons baptized?

A. The Scripture gives us the following account of the exercise of the power of laying on of hands: When Philip, the Deacon and Evangelist, had converted and baptized the Samaritans, the Apostles which were at Jerusalem sent unto them Peter and John, who having prayed and laid their hands on them, they received the Holy Ghost, who was before fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.[a] When the twelve disciples at Ephesus had been baptized by Timothy, or some other of St. Paul's assistants, Paul laid his hands on them, and the Holy Ghost came upon them.

Q. What results from this account of the original of this rite?

A. From this account it results: 1. That the end and design of this office was to confer the gifts of the Holy Ghost upon persons lately baptized. 2. That it was so strictly appropriated to the Apostles, that it could not ordinarily be performed even by inspired men, and workers of miracles, who were of an inferior order, (such was Philip the Deacon.) And, in the primitive Church, the Bishops, as successors of the Apostles, exercised this power.

Q. But was not the office of Confirmation appropriated to the apostolic age, and merely designed for the conveyance of miraculous gifts?

A. It cannot be proved that all who received imposition of hands in the apostolic age, were immediately endowed with miraculous gifts. It appears[c] that these gifts were not universal in the Church. And it is therefore unreasonable to

[a] Acts viii 14 17. [c] 1 Cor. xii. 29, 30

suppose that the whole body of Samaritan converts, on whom Peter and John laid their hands, received miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost. And as they all certainly did receive the Holy Ghost, it must have been his ordinary and common grace. Indeed, an ordinance that was not designed to convey grace necessary to all Christians at all times, would not be ranked by the Apostle among the principles of the doctrine of Christ,[p] and considered as essential and fundamental. In this light it was viewed by the primitive Church, which may reasonably be supposed to have best understood the design of the institutions of Christ and his Apostles.

Q. What qualifications are necessary for those who purpose to receive this sacred ordinance?

A. Since confirmation is an authentic renewal of the baptismal vow, and qualifies those who receive it to be admitted guests to the table of the Lord, the candidates ought to be thoroughly instructed in the nature of those holy promises which they then renew, and of the obligation to perform them. They ought to be acquainted with the meaning of this holy rite, and to understand whose office alone it is to administer it. They ought to have a competent degree of knowledge in those Christian duties that relate to God, their neighbour, and themselves. And they must further prepare themselves for this ordinance by prayer and fasting, and a serious resolution of living answerably to their Christian obligations. And in order to these ends, it is advisable that the candidate should frequently read over the offices of Baptism and Confirmation.

Q. What are the great advantages of Confirmation?

A. Confirmation is a new engagement to a Christian life, and is a lasting admonition and check, not to dishonour or desert our Christian profession. It is a renewal, to those who receive it in sincerity, of all the privileges of their baptism, of all the blessings of the Christian covenant. It is a testimony of God's favour and goodness to them, when his lawful minister not only declares, that God accepts their proficiency, but also advances them to a higher degree in the Church, by placing them among the faithful, and thereby giving them a title to approach the holy table of the Lord. It conveys divine grace to encounter our spiritual enemies, and to enable us to perform our Christian obligations.

Q. What order of men are authorized to exercise the power which belongs to the Church of ordaining ministers?

[p] Heb. vi. 1, 2.

A. It has before been fully proved from the concurrent testimony of Scripture and the primitive Church, that none but Bishops have authority to ordain ministers in the Church; and, consequently, none but those who are ordained by them can be truly said to have a divine commission, or any authority to minister in the Christian Church. Throughout the universal Church for fifteen hundred years, no instance occurs of an ordination by Presbyters that was considered valid. And this fact, that the universal Church considered Episcopal ordination only as valid, is proved by the very same testimony by which we establish the canon of Scripture, the validity of infant baptism, and the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.

Q. What is meant by the power which the Church possesses of making canons, or laws for the behaviour of its members in spiritual affairs?

A. It is not meant by the power of making laws or canons, that the Church has authority to change any of the divine laws, or impose any article of faith, or rule of moral duty, or to prescribe any condition of salvation, which is neither expressly contained in the Scriptures, nor can certainly be concluded from them; but only that she is invested with power in all such things as relate to the outward peace and order of the Church.

Q. But are not the things which relate to the outward order and peace of the Church determined by Scripture?

A. That these things are not particularly determined by Scripture, is very evident. The rules of Scripture are all general. We are commanded to assemble together to worship God; but the times and places are not expressed. We are commanded to follow such things as make for peace and edification, and to do all things decently and in order; but the particular methods whereby order must be maintained, and edification promoted, are no where set down. Timothy, and all other Bishops with him, are commanded to lay hands suddenly on no man; but the previous trials of such as are candidates for holy orders, and the time and methods of examination into their abilities and behaviour, are left undetermined.

Q. As these things are not determined by Scripture, does it not follow that the governors of the Church have authority to determine them?

A. It is necessary that these things should be determined;

for otherwise, disorder and confusion would ensue in the Church; and, therefore, Christ has certainly left the governors of his Church authority to determine them. Accordingly, if we inquire into the practice of the Apostles, and other primitive governors of the Church, we shall find, that, besides the standing rules of the Gospel, they established many regulations, as the several occasions of the Churches under their care required. In many of St. Paul's epistles, especially in those to the Corinthians, he prescribes particular rules for the decency of divine worship, the avoiding of scandal, and other things which were not determined by Christ: and he speaks of customs which he himself and other Apostles established, and the Churches observed.[q] There is, and ever will be the same necessity of prescribing rules for the peace and good government of the Church, and the order and decency of divine service, that there was in the apostolic age; and, consequently, there is the same reason why this authority should be transmitted to the Bishops in all ages, as any other part of the apostolical office.

Q. How does it appear, from considering the Church as a society, that it possesses authority to censure offenders, and exclude them from its communion?

A. As, in every civil society, authority to censure offenders, and exclude them from its communion, is necessary for securing men's lives and properties, which is the chief end for which it pleased God to institute these societies; so in the Church or spiritual society, the same authority is equally necessary to attain the ends for which the Church was founded; namely, to maintain the purity of divine worship, to secure men from the pollutions of the world, and train them up in virtue and piety now, in order to make them happy for ever. These ends cannot be effected if the Church has not power to exclude from its communion such unworthy members as endeavour to oppose these ends, by promoting vice, superstition, and infidelity.

Q. Does it not appear that the power of excommunication must be possessed by the Church, from considering that the privileges of the Church are conditional?

A. None can be admitted into the Church by baptism who do not, by themselves, or their sureties, profess the faith, and vow obedience to the laws of Christ; and if these conditions

[q] 1 Cor xi 16

are necessary for men's admission into the Church, they must be so for their continuance in it. For no reason can be shown why men should be obliged to promise faith and obedience in order to their becoming members of the Church, which does not equally hold for their exclusion from it when they notoriously break their vow. So that the power of excommunication is a manifest consequence of the baptismal covenant, and committed to the governors of the Church, who have the dispensation of the sacraments.

Q. Did not the Church receive this power from our Lord's institution?

A. The Church has received this power from our Lord's institution. Upon Peter's confessing our Lord to be the Son of God, he declared, first, that upon this rock he would build his Church, against which the gates of hell should never prevail; and then added, *I will give unto thee* (that is, to Peter, and with him to the rest of the Apostles) *the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.*[r] The meaning of this promise manifestly is, that the Apostles and their successors should be chief governors of the Church under Christ, and, as such, should have authority to admit persons into it, or exclude them from it; to condemn or absolve its members. This is certain from another passage, where our Lord, having cautioned his disciples that they should not offend others, proceeds to instruct them how to behave themselves when others should offend them. That, first, they should privately admonish the offender; if this did not bring him to repentance, they should then reprove him before two or three witnesses; but if this also proved unsuccessful, their last remedy should be to tell it to the Church; and if the offender still neglected to hear, as their authority was wholly spiritual, and they could not inflict any civil punishment on him, all that our Lord directs them to do is, that they should account the obstinate offender as an heathen or a publican;[s] they should look upon him no longer as a member of the Church, but place him among infidels, and other profligate men, whose conversation they used to shun.

Q. Was not this authority exercised, and held to be of divine right by the Apostles and their successors, the Bishops of the primitive Church?

[r] Matt. xvi. 19 [s] Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

A That this authority was exercised, and held to be of divine right by the Apostles and their successors, the Bishops of the primitive Church, is clear; from the case of Ananias and Sapphira, when it pleased God to attest the apostolic authority of retaining sins, by enabling Peter to strike both the offenders with present death;[t] and from the case of the incestuous Corinthian,[u] whom St. Paul delivered to Satan, excluded from the Church of Christ, for the crime of incest, and afterwards received again to communion upon repentance. And this power was not confined to the Apostles, but was to be continued to their successors. We find it was committed to Timothy and Titus, whom St. Paul set over the Churches of Ephesus and Crete: for he writes thus to Timothy: *Against an Elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses;*[v] and if he had power to receive accusations and hear witnesses, he must have authority to pass some censure upon them, if they were found guilty. The same Apostle writes thus to Titus: *A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.*[w] The like power had the angels of the seven Churches in the Revelation. For the Bishop of Pergamus was severely reproved for having the Nicolaitanes in his communion,[x] and the Bishop of Thyatira for suffering that woman Jezebel.[y] Which manifestly implies, they had authority to exclude them from the Church, for otherwise they could not have been blamed for permitting them to remain in it.

Q. Have not the Clergy a right to demand a competent and honourable maintenance from the people committed to their charge?

A. The Clergy have an undoubted right to demand a competent and honourable maintenance from the people committed to their charge. It is certain that God has an absolute right to dispose of all we have in the world; and since it has appeared, that he has appointed an *order* of men to attend continually on his worship and service, we cannot doubt but that he *requires* so much of our *worldly substance* to be *set apart* for their support, as may enable them to discharge the duties of their function, and such as may express the just respect which is borne to their office and character. Our *Lord* himself, with his retinue of *Apostles* and *Disciples*, was maintained by charitable contributions; for we read tha

t Acts v. 10 u 1 Cor. v. 1. v 1 Tim. v. 19.
w Tit iii. 10. x Rev. ii. 15 16 y Rev. ii. 20.

many ministered unto him of their substance.[a] When he sent forth his *Apostles* to preach, he gave them this instruction, *Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses, for the workman is worthy of his meat.*[c] Whence it is manifest, that our *Lord* accounted it the duty of those to whom the Gospel was preached, to give a *competent* maintenance to them that preached it. When the apostle St. *Paul* puts the *Thessalonians* in mind that he had maintained himself, he at the same time asserts his right to require *maintenance* of them: *Not* (says he) *because we have not power.*[b] And to the *Corinthians* he says, *That as they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar, even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.*[c]

Q. What other considerations may be urged to establish the duty of affording the clergy a comfortable *and* honourable *subsistence?*

A. The clergy, in order to devote themselves entirely to their spiritual functions, renounce all ordinary means of advancing their fortunes; and, therefore, it is highly fit that their laborious and difficult employment, the *important* and *disinterested* objects of which are *God's glory* and the *salvation of men*, should receive from us the encouragement of a *comfortable* and *honourable* subsistence. Their maintenance should bear some proportion to the dignity of their character, as *ambassadors for* Christ; and should raise them above the contempt of those who are too apt to be influenced by outward appearances. It should be sufficient to enable them not only to *provide for their families*, a duty incumbent upon them as well as the rest of mankind, but to be *examples* to their flock in *charity* and in *doing good.*

Q. Do not all lay-christians *owe some* obedience *to their* spiritual rulers?

A. That all *lay-christians* do owe some *obedience* to their *spiritual rulers*, is evident from our Lord's command to *hear the Church*,[d] and the injunction of the Apostle, *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account.*[e] The Church which we are *to hear* is to be known from the foregoing description of it; and the rulers to whom we are to yield *obedience*, and *submit* ourselves, are they who derive their commission by an uninterrupted succession from *Christ* and his apostles.

a Luke viii. 2, 3. b 2 Thess. iii. 9.
c 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. d Matt. xviii. 17. e Heb. xiii 17.

Q. Wherein does this obedience *consist, and what are the* limits *of it?*

A. Wherein this *obedience* to our spiritual rulers *consists*, and what are the *limits* of it, we may learn from the *nature* and *extent* of their power; for so far as they have a right to command, so far are we bound to obey. Now all things that are in the world may be divided into *good*, *bad*, and *indifferent*. The *good* oblige by their own nature, and the command of God: in these things the authority of our governors is of no force; for whatever is enjoined by the positive command of God, we are bound to do, whether they require it or not. The *evil* are by the same forbidden, and we are obliged not to obey our governors, if they should command them. So that it is the *indifferent* only whereto their authority reaches; and the things which are *indifferent* in themselves are *all* those which relate to the *outward peace and order* of the Church; which are not enjoined by the express word of God, but yet are in no respect contrary to it, in no wise forbidden by it. And as is their authority, such is to be our submission. So that the *obedience* we owe to our spiritual governors consists in observing all their injunctions, that are contained within these bounds of their commission; in *submitting* to that *discipline* which they shall inflict, either to recover us from a state of folly, or to preserve us from falling into it; in attending their *public administrations* at such *times* and *places* as they shall appoint, and upon such occasions as they shall judge proper, to increase our piety and devotion; and in *submitting* to such *regulations* as they shall think conducive towards the *edifying of the body of Christ*. This is our duty. For things which are indifferent in their *nature*, when commanded by lawful *authority*, are no longer indifferent to us, but become binding upon us. In disobeying them that have *the rule over* us, we disobey God, who has commanded us to be *subject for conscience sake;* and, therefore, we are to obey our spiritual rulers, from a sense of that right which they have to command, intrusted to them by God our Saviour, and of that great penalty to which we are liable by our contempt; *for he that despiseth them, despiseth him that sent them.*

Q. Wherein consists the dignity *of the* Christian ministry?

A. The dignity of the Christian Ministry consists in its *divine institution*, and in the *nature* of those *affairs* abou

which it treats, it being *ordained for men in things pertaining to God.*[f] It is an employment, in its own *nature* the most *honourable* and the most *happy*, and in its *effects* the most *beneficial* to mankind.

Q. How doth it appear to be the most honourable *employment?*

A. No man can be employed in any work more *honourable* than what immediately relates to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and to the salvation of souls, immortal in their nature, and redeemed by the *blood of God.* It is the same work in kind, and in the main end and design of it, with that of the blessed angels, who are *ministering spirits for those who shall be heirs of salvation.*[g] It is the same the Son of God discharged, when he condescended to dwell among men. The business of the ministry is, the increase and maintenance of that building whereof Christ laid the foundation when upon earth, the promotion of his glorious design for the salvation of souls.

Q. Wherein consists the happiness *of this employment?*

A. It fixes the mind upon the best and noblest objects; upon God, a being infinite in all perfections, upon that happiness which is placed in the eternal enjoyment of him, and upon those methods which are established for attaining this happiness. It engages men in the greatest acts of doing good, turning sinners from the error of their ways, and by all wise and prudent means gaining souls unto God. It exalts men above the low and mean concerns of this life; and engages them in the most noble and delightful employment, the improvement of the mind and the heart. The faithful and diligent discharge of the ministerial function gives a title to a higher degree of glory in the next world; for *they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.*[h]

Q. What are the benefits *of the* ministry?

A. It is by the execution of the office of the ministry that men are made *members of the Church* of *Christ* by baptism; and *without being born of water and of the spirit, we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven:*[i] that our *spiritual life* is maintained by the holy eucharist; for *the cup of blessing which they bless is the communion of the blood of Christ; the bread which they break, the communion of the*

[f] Heb. v. 1. [g] Heb. i. 14. [h] Dan xii. 3 [i] John iii. 5.

body of Christ:[j] that the *pardon of our sins* is signed and sealed to us; for by the authoritative sentence of absolution, and by the administration of the sacraments are the benefits of *Christ's* sacrifice really conveyed to the penitent and faithful. It is moreover by the faithful discharge of this high office that men are *turned from darkness to light*, convinced of the folly of their sins, and of the necessity of being holy, in order to their being happy. And the *good of the state* is advanced by those instructions which men receive from the ministers of God, in the necessary duties of obedience, justice, and fidelity. Without the ministry there could be no *religion*, and without *religion* society could not *exist*.

Q. What titles *of* honour *and* respect *are given in the Gospel to those who are invested with the* ministry?

A. The dignity and importance of their office are amply displayed in the Gospel. Those who are invested with the authority of the ministry are called the *ministers of* Christ, *stewards of the mysteries of God*,[k] to whom he hath committed the *word of reconciliation*,[l] *ambassadors for* Christ,[m] and *co-workers with him*.[n]

Q. What is implied in their being ministers of Christ?

A. By their being ministers of Christ is implied that they act by *commission from him*, that they are his officers and immediate attendants, employed in his particular business, empowered and authorized to declare the nature and conditions of his salvation.

Q. What is implied in their being stewards *of the* mysteries of God?

A. As a steward is the highest domestic officer, and governor of the whole family, who is to *give them their portion of meat in due season;* so the priests under the Gospel are instituted to *dispense spiritual food* for the nourishment of Christians, to feed them with God's holy word and sacraments, to speak *the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world*.[o]

Q. What is implied in their being public agents *and* ambassadors?

A. As ambassadors, they are *delegated* by God to solicit and maintain a *good correspondence* between God and man; that they are empowered to *administer* the word of *reconciliation*, to *sign* and *seal* covenants in the name of God;

j 1 Cor. x. 16. k 1 Cor. iv. 1. l 2 Cor. v. 19.
m 2 Cor. v. 20. n 2 Cor. vi. 1 o 1 Cor. ii. 7

upon which account their persons are *sacred*, and all contempt shown to them is an affront to their Master, whose character they bear.

Q. What is implied in their being co-workers with Christ?

A. As co-workers with Christ they *manage* and *carry on* that glorious design for which *he came into the world* and took upon him our nature; they are the *ministers of his spiritual kingdom*, to whose diligence and fidelity is committed its preservation and enlargement.

Q. The duties of providing an adequate maintenance for the clergy, and yielding them obedience, have been already explained and enforced. What other duties, arising from the consideration of the dignity *of their office, do we owe to the* clergy?

A. We should not only provide a *decent and honourable support* for the clergy, and yield them *ready obedience*, but we should also *honour* and *esteem*, *respect* and *revere* them highly, for their *works' sake*. We should entertain the highest *esteem* and *affection* for those whose business and object it is to advance our *eternal salvation:* we should treat those with the greatest *respect* and *reverence*, who have received a *commission from God*, to minister unto us in sacred things: we should be ready to *assist* them in all difficulties, to *vindicate* their reputations from the aspersions of calumny: and our *earnest prayers* for them should be directed to God, that they may be evermore guided and supported by his holy Spirit; that they may be defended from the *malice* of wicked men; that they may always enjoy the *countenance* and *support* of good men; and that their important labours may be crowned with *success*.

Q. Would we be justified in contemning or neglecting the ministrations of a duly authorized minister of Christ, on account of the irregularity or immorality of his life?

A. The personal qualification of the minister is, in a *certain degree*, necessary to the proper discharge of his sacred office, and is on that account truly desirable. But in the administration of an outward sacrament, which is to be considered as the appointed means of scriptural communication from God to man, nothing is to be considered as *absolutely necessary*, but the *lawfulness of the commission* by which it is administered. The *divine confirmation* of the ministerial act is secured to us by the *commission*, and not by the *personal qualification* of the minister, in order that

the eye of the faithful may be directed to the proper object, and *God*, not *man*, receive the glory. The baptism administered by Judas, who had received a commission from our Saviour to baptize, was without doubt equally effectual with that administered by any other apostle. Yet we read that this Judas was a devil.[p] *The effect of Christ's ordinances is not taken away by the wickedness* of those who administer them, *nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such who receive the sacraments rightly and by faith, which are effectual by reason of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.*[q] A pardon passed by an *immoral* governor, or a sentence pronounced by a *wicked* judge, are valid, because their efficacy depends not on the *qualifications* of the officers, but upon the *commission* which they hold. The irregular life therefore of a minister of Christ, will not justify us in neglecting or contemning his ministrations. Until he is suspended from the exercise of his ministerial office by the authority of the Church, before which we are bound to present proofs of his irregular life, it will be our duty to *reverence* his *ministrations*. By a contrary conduct we shall incur the guilt of contemning that *divine authority* on which the ministerial office is founded.

Q. The distinction of office between Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, has been fully established, and their respective powers and duties occasionally enumerated. It may now be proper to state distinctly the duties and powers of each of these offices. What powers belong to the office of a Bishop?

A. The office of a *Bishop* contains and includes in it all the powers of the Christian ministry; to preach, to pray, to administer the holy sacraments, to absolve penitents. It moreover contains peculiarly the power of *consecrating Bishops*, of *ordaining Presbyters* and *Deacons*, of *confirming* those who renew the solemn vow that was made in their names at their baptism, and of consecrating *Churches*. To this office belongs the inherent right of *administering* the *censures* of the Church, and the power of *ruling* and *governing* it, and providing for its welfare by good laws.

Q. What is the office of a Priest *or* Presbyter?

A. It is the office of a Priest or Presbyter to *teach* and *instruct* the people committed to his charge by the Bishop of the diocess, in the whole doctrine of Christianity, as contained in the holy Scriptures. To *administer* the *sacraments*

[p] John vi. 70, 71. [q] Article 26

and the *discipline* of *Christ*, as the Lord hath commanded. To *oppose* all such *erroneous* and *strange* doctrines as are contrary to God's word. To use both *public* and *private admonitions* and exhortations as well to the sick as to the whole within his cure, as need shall require, and occasion shall be given. To *offer up* the *prayers* in the public assemblies. To maintain *quietness*, and *peace*, and *love*, among all Christian people, especially among those committed to his charge. To *fashion* and *frame himself and family* according to the doctrine of *Christ;* and to make himself and them examples to the flock he feeds. To exercise all these duties with *diligence* and *fidelity*, and to *forsake* and *set aside* (as much as may be) all *worldly care* and *studies;* since the employment of his function is sufficient to engage all his time and all his thoughts."[r]

Q. What is the office of a Deacon?

A. "It pertaineth to the office of a *Deacon*, in the Church where he shall be appointed, to *assist* the *Priest* in divine service, and especially when he ministereth the holy communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof, and to *read* the *holy scriptures* and *homilies* in the congregation, and to *instruct* the youth in the *catechism;* to *baptize*, and to *preach*, if he be *admitted* thereto by the *Bishop*. And furthermore it is his office, where provision is so made, to *search* for the *sick*, *poor*, and *impotent people* of the parish; to intimate their estates, names, and places where they dwell, unto the Curate, that by his exhortation they may be relieved by the parish, or other convenient alms."[s]

Q. Upon what occasion *was this* order *instituted in the Church?*

A. This office had its original from the murmuring of the *Grecians*,[t] who were probably proselytes, *Jews* by religion, and *Gentiles* by descent, against the *Hebrews*, who were *Jews* both by religion and descent, *that their widows were neglected in the daily ministration*, when believers *had all things in common*, and were supplied out of one treasury. To prevent any mismanagement for the future, the apostles appointed seven men, of *honest report*, *full of the Holy Ghost*, *and of wisdom*, to superintend the necessities of the poor, and to *serve tables*, who were called *Deacons*.

Q. Doth this serving of tables *only imply their care of the poor?*

r Form of Ordination. s Form of Ordination. t Acts vi.

A. Besides the care of the poor, by their *serving of tables* was implied their peculiar attendance at the *Lord's table.* It was their office to *deliver the sacramental elements,* when consecrated, to the people. They had also authority to *preach* and *baptize,* as appears from the example of *Philip,* one of the seven: but they all along in the primitive Church retained so much of the chief design of their institution, that they took care of the Church's revenues under the *Bishops,* and distributed them as the *Bishop* and his college of *Presbyters* appointed.

Q. Was not this office *exercised, as some pretend, by* laymen?

A. The solemnity which was used in setting *Deacons* apart for this service, by prayer and imposition of hands, and the qualifications which St. *Paul* requires in a *Deacon,* almost the very same with those for a *Priest,* sufficiently prove this degree to be an *ecclesiastical office:* nor would the primitive Church have forbidden *Deacons,* as it certainly did, to follow secular employments, if they had been mere laymen.

Q. Having thus fully explained the nature and constitution of the Christian Church, it may be proper more fully to consider the necessity and obligation of communion *with it. On what is the* obligation *of* communion *with the Church founded?*

A. The *obligation* of *communion* with the Christian Church is founded on its being a society established by God,[u] to which he has annexed all the privileges and blessings of the Gospel covenant. Of course, in order to partake of these privileges and blessings, we must be *admitted* into the Christian Church, and maintain *communion* with it.

Q. But is not this communion with the Church impossible upon the supposition that every society *of professing Christians is the* Church *of Christ?*

A. Upon the supposition that *every society of professing* Christians is the *Church* of Christ, the Church, in that case, consists of as many separate societies, under different forms, as there are fanciful men to make them, and, consequently, is no longer in that *collected* state in which it is possible to live in *communion* with it. For before the members of the Church can live in communion with each other, the Church, as a society, must be at *unity* in itself.

[u] See page 19, 20.

Q. Prove that the Church of Christ is but one ; *and that, therefore, the preservation of* Christian unity *is a necessary duty.*

A. The apostle expressly says, "There is *one* body:[v] for by one spirit we are all baptized into *one body.*"[w] As there is *one Father*, the fountain of the Deity ; *one Lord Jesus Christ*, the eternal Son of God, who is "over all, God blessed for evermore," the head of the Church which he hath redeemed and purchased with his blood ; *one Holy Spirit*, by whom "the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified ;" *one faith* in this Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to the profession and acknowledgment of which all Christians are called ; *one baptism*, by which we profess this faith, are admitted into Christ's Church, and made partakers of that Spirit in whom our union with Christ subsists ; *one hope* of our heavenly calling, the hope of seeing God in glory :[x] so *the Church*, distinguished by these blessings and characters, depending on this *one* father, governed by this *one* head, sanctified by this *one* spirit, cemented by this *one* faith, washed by this *one* baptism, supported by this *one* hope, can be only *one.**

Q. How is this one *Church of Christ to be known?*

A. It has been already proved that the Church of Christ is a visible institution.[y] It is to be known by its *ministry*, which, as we have seen, was established by Christ and his apostles under the three orders of *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons ;* by its *doctrine*, and by its *sacraments.* Where these are as Christ ordained them, there is the Church of Christ ; where these, or any of them are wanting, there the Church is not ; at least, not in a sound and perfect state.

Q. Prove that this unity *of the Church is not inconsistent with the existence of particular independent local Churches.*

A. Christ's Church is *universal*, not limited to any period of time, nor confined to one nation. But this Church must necessarily be divided into different portions, each portion being a member of the one Church of Christ. Locally con-

v Eph. iv. 4. w 1 Cor. xii. 13. x Eph. iv. 3, 4, 5, 6.

* On the important subject of Christian unity, the reader is referred to Bishop Seabury's able discourse on "Christian Unity," in the first volume of his sermons ; and also to "Daubney's Guide to the Church," and to the "Appendix" to the same work. This eminent Presbyter of the Church of England endeavours, in language characterized not less by zeal and fervour, than by the most mild and insinuating simplicity, to restore Christians to those opinions on the doctrine and constitution of the Church, which distinguished the apostolic and primitive age.

y See page 21.

sidered, these portions may be denominated *particular Churches*, and take their names either from the city where the Bishop resides; or from the country, when a number of these Churches are united under a Metropolitan or Archbishop. In the *mode* of their *worship*, in the *particulars* of their *discipline*, in their *rites* and *ceremonies*, these Churches may *differ;* but so long as they retain the *ministry*, *faith*, and *sacraments* instituted by *Christ*, they are parts or members of his *Church*.

Q. How then is the unity *of the Church preserved?*

A. The *people* of the several congregations into which these local Churches are divided, keep up their *unity* with the Church, by *submitting* to its *discipline*, by *communion* with their *Presbyter*, and by their *right of communion* with every branch of the *universal Church*, wheresoever God's providence may cast them. The *clergy* preserve the same unity, by their *submission* to their *Bishop*, by their *communion* with *him* and with *each other*. In this way was the unity of the primitive Church preserved; its government, faith, and sacraments maintained in their integrity; and its discipline duly administered. The *people* preserved *communion* with their *Presbyter;* the *Presbyters* with their *Bishop;* the *Bishops* with *each other*, in government, doctrine, sacraments, and councils. In this way, all orders and degrees of Christians may enjoy all the means of grace and holy living which the all-gracious Head of the Church hath appointed for them; and each member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and acceptably serve God; and "holding the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life," may obtain the hope of his calling, eternal life with God in heaven.[a]

Q. How is the unity *of the Church* violated?

A. The unity of the Church is violated when any *Bishop* separates from the communion of the other Bishops of the *universal Church;* more particularly when any *Presbyter* separates from the communion of his *Bishop*, and sets up an *independent government* in the Church, and when the *people* separate themselves from the communion of their *duly authorized ministers*, and from the *government* of the Church.

Q. What is a wilful separation *from the communion of the Church styled in the language of* scripture *and* primitive *writers?*

A. A *wilful separation* from the communion of the Church is styled in scripture, and by the primitive writers, the sin of *schism.* The term *schism,* in its application to the Church of Christ, denotes a *division* among the members composing that body; occasioned by any of them *rejecting* that *ministry* which *Christ* established in his Church, and thereby *separating* from its *communion.*

Q. What is the judgment of scripture and the primitive writers concerning the sin *of* schism?

A. From the writings of St. Paul it may be collected that he considers schism as a *carnal sin,*[a] and that this sin consists in a *separation* from the *communion* of the *Church,* and a setting up of teachers *independent* of its *government,* and destructive of its *unity.* In the epistle of St. Jude mention is made of those who "perished in the gainsaying of Core." There is, therefore, a sin in the Christian Church answering to that of Korah in the Jewish. His sin consisted in his rebelling against the order of government established in that Church, of which he was an inferior minister. The sin of Christians, therefore, corresponding to that of Korah, consists in their rebellion against that government by Bi shops, Priests, and Deacons, which Christ and his apos tles instituted in the Church. The uniform testimony of all the apostolic and primitive writers establishes the general conclusion, that whoever was in *communion* with the *Bishop,* the supreme governor of the Church upon earth, was in *communion* with *Christ,* the head of it; and whoever was not in communion with the Bishop, was thereby cut off from communion with Christ; and that sacraments not administered by the Bishop, or those commis sioned by him, were not only ineffectual to the parties but moreover like the offerings of Korah, provocations against the Lord.[b]

Q. But do not these sentiments concerning the nature of schism *and the necessity of* communion *with the* Church *contradict the* general opinions *of the present day, and violat that* liberal judgment *which we should form concerning the spiritual character and state of our fellow men?*

A. To determine upon the legality or illegality of a practice from *man's opinion* concerning it, is to set up a standard of judgment which is perpetually *varying,* and on that account ever liable to *deceive.* Christians, in religious mat-

[a] 1 Cor. ii. 3, &c. [b] Daubeny.

ters, have a more sure word than that of man to depend upon; if they are wise, therefore, they will not suffer themselves to be governed by a lesser authority when they have a greater always at hand to direct them. *Custom* has, indeed, so far reconciled us to the divisions which have taken place among Christians, that they are no longer seen in the light in which they were seen in the primitive days of the Church; whilst *charity* forbidding us to speak harshly of the spiritual condition of our brethren, has in a manner tended to efface the *sin* of *schism* from our minds. But though we presume to *judge no man*, leaving *all judgment* to that *Being* who is alone *qualified to make allowance* for the *ignorance, invincible prejudices, imperfect reasonings*, and *mistaken judgments* of his frail creatures; yet it must not from hence be concluded, that it is a matter of indifference, whether Christians communicate with the Church or not; or that there is a doubt upon the subject of *schism*, whether it be a sin or not.[e]

Q. What may be considered as justifiable *causes of* separation *from any branch of the universal Church?*

A. When any branch of the universal Church imposes *sinful* terms of communion, we may justifiably separate from her. But we *are not* then *authorized* to form a Church upon a *new plan*, and to reject the *authorized ministry* of the Church; by which conduct we should be guilty of the heavy sin of *schism*. We are still bound to preserve the *unity* of the Church, and therefore to *adhere* to the government of the Church, by *Bishops*, *Priests*, and *Deacons*, by which government the *visible Church* of Christ is *known*. The important principle should ever be kept in view, that the *unity* of the Church is *broken*, and the *benefits* of Church-communion *forfeited*, when we *separate* from that *priesthood* which was constituted by Christ as the *essential characteristic* of his Church, the *channel* through which the *blessings* of his redemption are to be conveyed to men.

Q. On what grounds do you justify the separation *of the Church of England from the communion of the Church of Rome?*

A. The *separation* of the Church of England from the Church of Rome was grounded, not upon the idea that she had a right to form a Church for herself, upon any new plan of her own, but upon the idea that it was no longer compa-

[e] Daubeny

tible with the spiritual welfare of her members to hold communion with a *corrupt Church.* It was neither the *ministry* nor *doctrine* of the Church of Christ that was protested against on this occasion, but the *corruptions* which had taken place in both; the usurped supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and those dangerous tenets which were incompatible with some of the most essential articles of the Christian Church.[d] The Church of England, therefore, returned to that primitive government and faith from which the Church of Rome had *degenerated;* and as she still retained the *true priesthood* and *government* of the Church, it is evident she cannot, in any sense, be charged with the sin of *schism,* but still continues in the *unity* of the Church.

Q. From the foregoing view which has been taken of the important subject of the unity *of the Church, does it not appear to be the sacred duty of all Christians to* preserve *and endeavour to* promote *this unity?*

A. Most ardently and affectionately did the blessed Redeemer pray for his apostles, and all those who should believe on him through their word, "that they all might be *one.*" Most earnestly does the apostle exhort us to "endeavour to keep the *unity* of the *spirit* in the bond of peace." The *unity* of the *spirit* can only be kept by keeping the *unity of the Church,* which is the body animated by it. The disposition to do so will show itself by *continuing* in the *Church,* if, by God's grace, it is our happy lot to be already in it; or by *coming into it* with all sincerity of heart, if it be our misfortune hitherto to have kept ourselves out of it—*submitting* quietly and peaceably to its *government*—abiding in *sacraments* and *worship* with its *ministers*—steadfastly holding the *common faith* once delivered to the saints—living in *holiness* and *piety* towards God, and in *love* and *charity* with all its members—and exercising *good will* and *affection* to all mankind.[e]

Collects *and* Prayers *for the* Church.

The Collects for Good Friday. Collect for the fifth Sunday after Trinity. Collect for the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity. Collect for the twenty-second Sunday after Trinity Collect for St. John the Evangelist's day. Collect for St Mathias's day. Collect for St. Peter's day. Collect for St. Bartholomew the Apostle. Collect for St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles.

d Daubeny

e Seabury.

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS

CONCERNING

FESTIVALS AND FASTS.

Q. WHAT *do you mean by Festivals?*

A. Festivals are days set apart by the Church, either for the remembrance of some special mercies of God, such as the birth and resurrection of Christ, the descent of the Holy Ghost, &c. or in memory of the blessed apostles, and other saints, who were the happy instruments of conveying to us the knowledge of Christ Jesus.

Q. Of what authority is the observation of these Festivals?

A. They are of ecclesiastical institution; agreeable to scripture in their general design, which is the promoting of piety; and consonant to the practice of the primitive Church.

Q. What kind of days are they whose observation is condemned in scripture?

A. Such days only are forbidden to be observed in scripture as were dedicated by the heathens to their false gods, or as were observed by them as lucky or unlucky days; these being the abominations of the heathens condemned in Deuteronomy:[f] Or the holy days of the Jews, which, though abrogated, the Judaizing Christians attempted to impose upon the Galatians,[g] as necessary to salvation; contrary to the apostle's endeavours of setting them at liberty in the freedom of the Gospel, and to the doctrine of salvation by Christ alone.

Q. Is the observation of such days as are in use among Christians forbidden in scripture?

A. The observation of such days as are in use among Christians is not forbidden in scripture. God, who had in abomination the observer of times, does himself ordain several feasts to be observed in memory of past benefits; as the feast of the passover, of weeks, and of tabernacles. Be-

[f] Deut. xviii. 10. [g] Gal. iv. 10, 11

s des, our Saviour kept a feast of the Church's institution, viz. the Feast of Dedication. And the common practice of all Christian churches and states, in appointing and keeping days of public thanksgiving and humiliation, prove, that, in the common sense of Christians, the observance of such days is not forbidden in scripture.

Q. What may be pleaded for such days, from the design of their institution?

A. Since it is a great duty to be grateful, and to give thanks to God for the blessings we receive from him, it must be not only lawful, but commendable, to appoint and observe days for the particular remembrance of such blessings, and to give thanks for them. The sanctifying of such days is a token of that thankfulness, and part of that public honour which we owe to God for his inestimable benefits.

Q. But do not these festivals restrain the praises of God, which ought to be extended to all times, to particular times alone?

A. No duty can be performed without the circumstance of time; and the appointment of a certain time for the duty of praise, tends only to the securing of some time for the exercise of the duty, against the frailties of men and the disturbances of the world.

Q. Is not our Church symbolizing with the Church of Rome, in the hallowing of days, an objection against the observation of them?

A. Conformity to any Church, in such institutions as tend to promote piety, and are agreeable to scripture and primitive antiquity, no way deserves censure. Neither is the Church of Rome blameable for the hallowing of days, but for grafting upon them such erroneous and superstitious practices as are unknown to scripture, and to the purest ages of the Church. For which reason, and many more very substantial ones, we were forced to separate from her communion.

Q. But doth not the abuse of festivals to intemperance and luxury make it necessary to have them abolished?

A. The objection that festivals are abused, can, with no more propriety, be urged against festivals, than the scandalous lives of Christians against the efficacy of the Christian Religion: But as the scandalous lives of Christians is an objection not so strong against Christianity as it is shameful to Christians; so this perverting of Holy Seasons shows only

the depravity of mankind, in turning to their injury what was designed for their benefit; and no way impeaches the prudence or piety of the institution of festivals. They who are intemperately disposed do, indeed, upon these occasions, turn feasting, designed for hospitality and charity, into luxury and excess: so the same men treat the Lord's day with as little respect, and make the advantage of rest and leisure from their worldly affairs only an instrument to promote their pleasure and diversions. It should be the earnest endeavour of Christians to retrieve the honour of these Holy Seasons, by the exercises of piety and charity.

Q. Did not the primitive Church observe festivals in commemoration of the apostles and other eminent saints?

A. The primitive Christians were wont once a year to meet at the graves of the martyrs, there solemnly to recite their sufferings and triumphs, to praise their virtues, and to bless God for their pious examples, for their holy lives and their happy deaths. They also celebrated these days with great expressions of love and charity to the poor, and of temperate and sober rejoicing.

Q. In what manner ought we to observe the festivals of the Church?

A. We should constantly attend the public worship, and partake of the blessed sacrament, if it be administered. In private we should enlarge our devotions, and suffer the affairs of the world to interrupt us as little as possible. We should particularly express our rejoicing by love and charity to our poor neighbours. If we commemorate any mystery of our redemption, or article of our faith, we ought to confirm our belief of it, by considering all those reasons upon which it is built; that we may be able to give a good account of the hope that is in us: and we should, from our hearts, offer to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and resolve to perform all those duties which result from the belief of the particular mystery or doctrine which the festival of the day presents to our faith and gratitude. If we commemorate any saint, we should consider the virtues for which he was most eminent, and by what steps he arrived at so great perfection: and then we should examine ourselves how far we are defective in our duty, earnestly supplicating God's pardon for our past failings, and his grace to enable us to conform our lives to those admirable examples that are set before us.

Q. What are the advantages of a serious observation of festivals?

A. A serious observation of the festivals of the Church, testifies our great regard to the institutions of the Church, and our obedience to our spiritual superiors, to whom we ought to submit, as to those that watch for our souls.[h] It fixes in our thoughts the great mysteries of our redemption; it fills our hearts with a thankful sense of God's great goodness; it raises our minds above the world, and inures us to a sober frame and temper of soul; it kindles a prudent zeal and fervour in performing the offices of religion; and tends to produce a readiness to do or suffer any thing for the name of Jesus.

Q. What do you mean by fasts?

A. Fasts are days set apart by the Church, or by civil authority, or by our own appointment, in which, by abstinence, humiliation, and repentance, we are to testify our grief for our past sins, and strengthen our resolutions of holy obedience.

Q. Whence arises the obligation of a Christian to fast?

A. Nature seems to suggest fasting as a proper expression of sorrow and grief, and as a fit method to dispose our minds towards the consideration of serious things. It appears from the scriptures,[i] that devout persons have always practised fasting, both as a part of their devotion, and as a powerful aid to it; and all nations from ancient times have used fasting as a part of repentance, and as a mean to turn away God's anger.

Q. Was fasting practised in the primitive Church?

A. The ancient Christians were very exact both in their weekly and annual fasts. Their weekly fasts were kept on Wednesdays and Fridays; because on the one our Lord was betrayed, and on the other crucified. These fasts were called their stations, from the military word of keeping their guard, as Tertullion observes;[j] though others think more immediately from the Jewish phrase, and the custom of those devout men, who, either out of their own devotion, or as the representatives of the people, assisted at the oblations of the temple; not departing thence till the service was over: for

[h] Heb. xiii 17.
[i] Psalm lxix. 10. Dan. ix. 3. Luke ii 37. Acts x. 30. Acts xiii. 2. 2 Cor. vi. 5, xi. 27. 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[j] Tertul. de Jejun, c. 2.

these fasts usually lasted till after three in the afternoon, as did their public assembles. Their annual fast was that of Lent, by way of preparation for the feast of our Saviour's resurrection: but this was variously observed, according to different times and places.

Q. What was the manner of fasting among the primitive Christians?

A. They observed their fasts with great strictness.[k] All, in general, on such days, abstained from drinking wine and eating flesh; the greatest part fed only on herbs or pulse, with a little bread. They confined themselves to cheap and ordinary diet, without sauces or relishing delicacies. Some used dry diet, as nuts, almonds, and such like fruits; others fed only upon bread and water.

Q. But does not St. Paul[l] place the abstaining from meats among the doctrines of seducing spirits?

A. It cannot be supposed that by abstaining from meats St. Paul should mean the duty of fasting; because that was observed by devout men, and acceptable to God, both under the Old and New Testament. Our Saviour himself hath given directions concerning the performance of it in his admirable sermon upon the mount;[m] and the Apostle Paul himself practised it upon several occasions.[n] Therefore, it is most probable he means to condemn the opinions of some ancient heretics who departed from the faith, and who, as they excluded those from salvation who engaged in matrimony, so they held the eating of the flesh of any living creatures unlawful; a doctrine more probably borrowed from Pythagoras and his followers, being defended with such a variety of learning by Porphyry.[o] But they who are instructed in their Christian liberty, and know the truth, are fully satisfied that God has permitted[p] the use of such his creatures for our nourishment and sustenance, provided we receive them always with temperance and thanksgiving; and that the Gospel has taken away the difference between things clean and unclean.[q]

Q. How is a day of fasting to be observed by serious Christians?

A. Not only by interrupting and abridging the care of our bodily sustenance, but by carefully inquiring into the state

k Cyr. Hiercatech. 4. *l* 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3. *m* Matt. vi. 16, 17, 18
n 1 Cor. ix. 27. 2 Cor. xi. 27. vi. 5. 1 Tim. iv. 1.
o De Abst. ab usu Anim. *p* Gen. ix. 3. Acts vii. 26, 27, 33
q Rom. xiv 14. Acts x. 15.

of our souls; charging ourselves with all those transgressions which we have committed against God's laws, humbly confessing them with shame and confusion of face, with hearty contrition and sorrow for them; deprecating God's displeasure, and begging him to turn away his anger from us: by interceding with him for such spiritual and temporal blessings upon ourselves and others as are needful and convenient; by improving our knowledge in all the particulars of our duty; by relieving the wants and necessities of the poor, that our humiliation and prayers may find acceptance with God; and, if the fast be public, by attending the public places of God's worship

CHAPTER I.

THE LORD'S DAY.

Q. WHAT *part of our time hath God appropriated to his immediate service?*

A. God hath appropriated to his immediate service one day in seven, which he hath commanded to be kept holy.

Q. What day was originally set apart for this purpose?

A. The seventh was originally set apart for this purpose For God having in six days made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, he rested the seventh day, and hallowed it.

Q. What mean you by God's resting from his works?

A. This resting of God being spoken after the manner of men, implies not any weariness in him, for the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary;[r] but that the creation of all things was finished, and the world entirely made. This hallowed rest on the seventh day was considered as the symbol of the rest of the just from all their labours; when all grief, sorrow, and sighing shall flee away, and God shall be all in all.

Q. Why was the seventh day, called Saturday, commanded to be observed by the Jews?

A. By sanctifying the seventh day, after they had laboured six days, the Jews avowed themselves worshippers of that God only, who created the heaven and the earth, and having spent six days in that great work, rested the seventh day; and who therefore commanded this suitable contribution of their time, as a badge that their religious service was appropriated to him alone. By sanctifying that seventh day, they also professed themselves the servants of Jehovah, as, in a peculiar sense, their God and Redeemer, who redeemed them out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage.[s] For upon the morning watch of that very day which they kept for their Sabbath, he overwhelmed Pharaoh, and all his host, in the Red Sea, and saved Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians.

Q. How far, and in what manner, doth the observation bind Christians?

A. The Christian, as well as the Jew, after six days

r Gen. ii. 3. s Deut. v. 15.

spent in his own works, is to sanctify the seventh day, that he may profess himself thereby a servant to God, the Creator of heaven and earth. But, in the designation of the day, the Christian differs from the Jew. The Christian chooseth for his day of rest the first day of the week, that he may thereby profess himself a servant of that God, who, on the morning of that day, vanquished Satan, and redeemed us from our spiritual thraldom, by raising Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead, conferring on us a title, not to an earthly Canaan, but to an inheritance incorruptible in the heavens.

Q. What authority have we for the change of this day from the seventh to the first day of the week?

A. The authority and practice of the holy Apostles,[s] the first planters of Christianity. It appears from the scriptures, that the first day of the week was their stated and solemn time of meeting for public worship. On this day the apostles were assembled, when the Holy Ghost came down so visibly upon them to qualify them for the conversion of the world.[t] On this day we find St. Paul preaching at Troas when the disciples came together to break bread,[u] whereby is understood the celebration of the sacrament, or their feasts of charity, which were always accompanied with the Eucharist. And the directions the same apostle gives to the Corinthians,[x] concerning their contributions for the relief of their poor suffering brethren, seem plainly to regard their religious assemblies on the first day of the week.

Q. How was this day observed in the primitive Church?

A. The primitive Christians, both in city and country, had their public meetings on Sundays.[y] In these assemblies the writings of the apostles and prophets were read to the people, and the doctrines of Christianity were further pressed upon them by the exhortations of the clergy; solemn prayers were offered up to God, and hymns sung in honour of our Saviour; the blessed sacrament was administered to those who were present, and the consecrated elements sent to those who were absent; and collections were also made for the relief of the sick and the poor.

Q. Why is the first day of the week called the Lord's day?[z]

A. The first day of the week is called the Lord's day, not

s Acts. xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 2.
t Acts ii. 1.
u Acts xx. 7.
x 1 Cor. xvi. 2.
y Just. Mar. Apol. 2. Plin. lib. 10. Ep 97. Orig. lib. 3. cont. Cels.
z Rev. i. 10.

only because it is immediately dedicated to the service of God; but because on that day our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and rested from the work of our redemption, which he then completed by his resurrection.

Q. Though the most proper name of this day of public worship is the Lord's day,[a] did the primitive Christians scruple to call it Sunday?

A. Justin Martyr[b] and Tertullian[c] both call it Sunday, because it happened upon that day of the week which, by the heathens, was dedicated to the sun; and, therefore, as being best known to them, the fathers commonly made use of this name in their apologies to the heathen governors. And this day seldom passes under any other name in the Imperial edicts of the first Christian Emperors. It may, indeed, with great propriety, retain this name; because it is dedicated to the honour of that Saviour, who is, by the prophet, called the Sun of Righteousness, that was to arise with healing in his wings.[d]

Q. Is it proper to designate the Lord's day by the name of the Sabbath?

A. The Lord's day may, in one sense, be called the Sabbath, because we rest on that day from the works of our ordinary callings, and all other worldly employments, and dedicate it to the immediate worship of God, whose service is perfect freedom. But by scripture, and all the primitive ecclesiastical writers, the term Sabbath is constantly appropriated to Saturday, the day of the Jewish Sabbath, and only within late ages has been used to signify the Lord's day. The charge of Judaism upon those who use this term in a Christian sense, may appear too severe; yet, upon many accounts, it is expedient not to distinguish the day of the Christian worship by the name of the Sabbath, that term being properly applied only to the day of the Jewish worship.

Q. How ought Christians to observe this day?

A. It is not enough that we rest on Sunday from the works of our calling, and abstain from worldly affairs and recreations: our time must be employed in all such religious exercises as tend to the glory of God, and the salvation of our souls. We must regularly frequent the worship of God in the public assemblies, join in the prayers of the Church, hear his holy word, receive the blessed sacrament when ad-

[a] Rev. i. 10.
[b] Just. Mar. Apol. 2.
[c] Tert. Apol. v. ad Nation. l. 1
[d] Mal. iv. 2.

ministered, and contribute to the relief of the poor, if there be any collection for their support. In private, we ought to enlarge our ordinary devotions, and to make the subject of them chiefly to consist in thanksgivings for the works of creation and redemption; recollecting also all those particular mercies which we have received from the bounty of Heaven, through the whole course of our lives. We should devote a portion of the day to reading and meditating upon divine subjects; and we should make it our business to instruct our children and families; to visit the sick and the poor, comforting them by seasonable counsel and charity.

Q. What seems to be the principal duty on this day?

A. The principal duty on this day is the being present at the assemblies at public worship, from which nothing but sickness or absolute necessity should detain us. For the day being dedicated to the honour and worship of God, and also appointed for the purpose of openly professing ourselves Christians, it will be an evidence that we are insensible both to the honour of God and to our Christian profession and privileges, if we neglect the duty of public worship. Nothing troubled the primitive Christians more, when sick and in prison, or under banishment, than that they could not come to the public worship of the Church.

Q. What are the great advantages of the religious observation of the Lord's day?

A. The religious observation of the Lord's day keeps up the solemn and public worship of God, and thus preserves the knowledge and visible profession of the Christian religion in the world. Considering how much time is taken up, by the greatest part of mankind, in providing for the necessaries of life; and how negligent and careless, in the concerns of their souls, they are who enjoy plenty and abundance; this stated season is highly useful to instruct the ignorant, by preaching and catechising, and to put those in mind of their duty, who, in their prosperity, are apt to forget God. Moreover, by spending this day in religious exercises, we acquire new strength and resolution to perform God's will in our several stations, the week following.

Q. Where are the acts of public worship to be performed?

A. In the Church, the house of God, so called, because solemnly dedicated and set apart for his public worship and service, and because it may be considered as the place of his peculiar presence.[e]

[e] Exod. xx. 24. Hab. ii. 20 Matt. xviii. 20.

Q. Did the Apostles and primitive Christians set apart particular places for public worship?

A. Even in the times of the Apostles, there were places set apart for the performance of divine worship.[f] Though these places for public worship were concealed from the Jews and Heathens, being either part of the houses of Christians, or within the compass of them, yet they were sufficiently known to the faithful.

Q. How ought we to show our reverence for holy places

A. By building and erecting such places where they are wanting, and furnishing them decently for the worship of God; by repairing and adorning them, when time, or the iniquity of an age, has made them ruinous; by keeping them from all profane and common uses, and applying them wholly to the business of religion; by offering up our prayers in them with fervour and frequency; by hearing God's word with attention and resolutions of obeying it, and by celebrating the holy mysteries with humiliation and devotion; by using all those outward testimonies of respect which the Church enjoins, or which may be established by the custom of the age in which we live, as marks of honour and reverence; and, above all, by governing our whole behaviour in such places, with a due regard to those ends and purposes for which they were dedicated and set apart; abstaining from conversation, and from all negligent and light behaviour, when assembled in them.

Q. What preparation of mind is necessary for our joining in the public prayers?

A. We should endeavour to abstract our thoughts as much as we can from our worldly business and concerns, that we may call upon God with attention and application of soul; to keep our passions in order and subjection, that none of them may interrupt us when we approach the throne of grace; to possess our minds with such an awful sense of God's presence, as may lead us to behave with gravity and reverence; to work in ourselves such a sense of our own weakness and insufficiency, as may make us earnest for the supplies of supernatural grace, such a sorrow for our sins, such humiliation for them, and such a readiness to forgive others, as may prevail upon God, for the sake of Christ's sufferings, to forgive us; and, lastly, we should endeavour to recollect those many blessings which we have received,

[f] 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35. 1 Cor. xi. 22. Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. Col. iv. 15. Philem. i. 2. Rom. xvi. 10, 11

that we may show forth the praise of God, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to his service.

Q. Since prayer is one of the great duties of public worship, state wherein the nature of prayer consists.

A. Prayer is the address of the soul to God, and the ascent of the mind towards Heaven; and it receives different names, according to the various subjects upon which it is employed. When we bewail our particular sins with sorrow, and full purposes of amendment, it is called *confession;* when we implore God's mercy, and desire any favour from him, *petition;* when we beseech him to avert from us any evil, *supplication;* when we express a grateful sense of benefits received, *thanksgiving;* when we acknowledge and adore the divine perfections, *praise;* when we beg any thing for others, it is styled *intercession.*

Q. But since God knows all things, and, being infinitely good, is always ready to supply us, how doth it appear necessary to make such addresses to him?

A. Prayer is necessary, as it is one of the highest acts of religious worship, whereby we acknowledge God's infinite perfections, and own our entire dependence upon him; that he is the fountain of all goodness, and that we are weak and imperfect. Besides, God hath established it as a means whereby we are to obtain the blessings which we need: we are to ask before it will be given, we must seek before we shall find, we must knock before it will be opened unto us.[g] And God hath promised the assistance of his Holy Spirit,[h] to help us in the performance of our prayers; and hath appointed his Son to intercede, by virtue of his merits, for their acceptance.[i]

Q. What has been the practice of the world in regard to the duty of prayer?

A. The most barbarous nations, as they have owned the being of a God, so have they always expressed their respect and reverence of a Deity, by making addresses to him. By their offering sacrifices, they acknowledged that God was the great Sovereign of the universe, that all good things came from him, and that from his bounty alone they could expect a supply of their wants. In all ages, good men have, in this manner, constantly exercised their devotion, and have exposed themselves to the utmost dangers and hazards, rather than neglect this duty. The blessed Jesus thus testified

[g] Matt. vii. 7. [h] Rom. viii. 26. [i] Heb. vii. 25.

his obedience and submission, his love and humility: he often went into the places of public worship, and frequently retired all alone, and spent whole nights in the exercise of prayer.

Q. What ought we to pray for?

A. In the first place, we ought to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness;[j] all those things that are necessary to our salvation: to pray that God would be pleased to illuminate our understandings with the knowledge of divine truths; that he would pardon our sins, strengthen our resolutions of better obedience, assist us to overcome temptations, and, by the help of his Spirit, enable us to walk in his ways all the days of our lives. In regard to this world, we should beseech God, that he would be pleased to supply us with such a share of the good things of it, as may be most agreeable to his will, and answer the ends of his universal providence, and may most conduce to our eternal welfare.

Q. What encouragement have we to beg the supply of our spiritual and temporal wants?

A. The infinite goodness of the divine nature, and that universal providence whereby God governs the world, are sufficient motives to induce us to approach the throne of his majesty. But, lest his greatness, and the sense of our own unworthiness, should make us afraid, and keep us at a distance, God hath been graciously pleased to excite us to the performance of this duty, by promises of the success of our petition; that he will be nigh to all those that call upon him;[k] that he is ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon him;[l] that whatever we shall ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive.[m]

Q. Upon what conditions hath God promised to hear our prayers?

A. The great confidence of our being heard, must be laid in asking according to his will,[n] and in soliciting his favour upon those terms upon which he hath promised to grant it. When we beg pardon for our sins, we must resolve to forsake them; for the prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord:[o] and we must be ready to forgive those that trespass against us, because it is the merciful man who shall obtain mercy.[p] When we ask for any virtue, we must be sure diligently to endeavour after it. When we supplicate

j Matt. vi. 33. *k* Psal. cxlv. 18. *l* Psal. lxxxvi. 5. *m* Matt. xxi. 22.
n 1 John v. 14. *o* Prov. xxviii. 9. *p* Matt. v. 7.

the help of divine grace, we must be ready to co-operate and concur with it; for to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.[q] When we pray for any temporal blessings, we must take all prudent and lawful means to acquire them, and resign ourselves entirely to the wisdom of God, to give such success to our endeavours as he shall think most conducive to our salvation and the good of others. And all these petitions for spiritual and temporal wants, must be offered to God through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ only.

Q. In what manner ought we to pray?

A. We ought to pray with such lowliness of mind, such reverent and serious deportment, as will plainly testify the respect and veneration we have for God's infinite majesty: with such intenseness and application of thought, as will engage our hearts as well as our lips in his service: with such fervency of affection, and such a measure of importunity, as will show how desirous we are of the mercy we request, and how highly we value and esteem what we ask for: with such a faith as consists in firmly believing we shall receive the good things we desire, when we have performed those conditions upon which God hath promised to bestow them. To all which we must add constancy and perseverance; embracing all opportunities for prayer, and spending much time in this duty.

Q. What prayers are most acceptable to God, and most necessary for us?

A. Those prayers are most acceptable to God, and most necessary for us, that are offered in public assemblies. By public prayers, God is most honoured and glorified. A sense of his majesty is maintained in the world, somewhat suitable to his most excellent greatness and goodness, when, by outward signs and tokens, we publish and declare the inward regard and esteem we have for his divine perfections. By maintaining fellowship with God and one another in the duties of prayer and praise, we keep up our communion with the Church, which is the body of Christ. To the public assemblies of Christians our Saviour promises his special presence, and he has appointed a particular order of men to minister in them, and to offer up our prayers. We may expect greater success, when our petitions are made with the joint and unanimous consent of our fellow Christians, and

[q] Mark iv 25.

when our devotions receive warmth and fervour from their exemplary zeal. These considerations should make all good Christians regularly attend public worship.

Q. Is family prayer a duty incumbent upon the master of a family?

A. A master of a family is answerable to God for the welfare of those souls that are under his care; and a sense of religion cannot be maintained in a family, without the exercise of daily devotion in it. This is the best method to confirm and establish children and servants in the practice of their Christian obligations. When, in a body, they daily acknowledge the perfections of God, and supplicate his favour for the mercies of which they stand in need, they have the greatest reason to hope that his blessing will descend upon them. Nor should this devotion be neglected at our meals; for we ought to beg the blessing of God upon those good creatures provided for our use, since it is by the word of God and prayer[r] that they are sanctified to us.

Q. What are the great advantages of the frequent and devout exercise of the duty of prayer?

A. The constant exercise of prayer is the best method to get the mastery of our evil inclinations, and to overcome our vicious habits. It preserves a lively sense of our duty upon our minds, and fortifies us against those temptations that continually assault us: it raises our souls above this world, by making spiritual objects familiar to them; and supports us under the calamities and crosses of this life, by sanctifying such afflictions: it leads us gradually to the perfection of Christian piety, and preserves that union between our souls and God, in which our spiritual life consists.

Q. Since our Church has prescribed a form of prayer, or Liturgy, for the public service of the Church, state some of the particular advantages of forms of prayer.

A. When a form of prayer is used, the people are previously acquainted with the prayers in which they are to join, and are thus enabled to render unto God a reasonable and enlightened service. In forms of prayer, the greatest dignity and propriety of sentiment and expression may be secured. They prevent the particular opinions and dispositions of the minister from influencing the devotions of the

[r] 1 Tim. iv. 5.

congregation; they serve as a standard of faith and practice; and they render the service more animating, by uniting the people with the minister in the performance of public worship.

Q. Are not prescribed forms of prayer for public worship sanctioned by Scripture, and the universal usage of the Church?

A. The public service of the Jews was according to prescribed forms of prayer. We are told, that David appointed the Levites to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even, (1 Chron. xxiii. 30.) which duty could not be performed by many persons together, without some set form, in which they could all join. The whole book of Psalms may be considered as forms of prayer and praise, suggested by the Holy Ghost, for the joint use of the congregation.* Our Saviour, by joining in communion with the Jewish Church, gave his sanction to set forms; and, finally, gave his strongest approbation to continuing the practice, by delivering to his disciples at least one set form of prayer. The apostles and disciples no doubt joined, till our Lord's ascension, in the Jewish worship, which was conducted according to a prescribed form. That the primitive Christians used set forms of prayer, is also evident from the expressions to be found in the earliest fathers, of *common prayers, constituted prayers*, &c. The Bishop in each diocess established set forms of prayer for the churches under his authority. Many of these ancient Liturgies are still extant.† So that forms of prayer, besides possessing many peculiar advantages, have the authority of Scripture. and the universal usage of the Church.

Q. What are the peculiar excellences of the Liturgy prescribed by our Church?

A. In the Liturgy of our Church there is an admirable mixture of instruction and devotion. The Lessons, the Creeds, the Commandments, the Epistles and Gospels, contain the most important and impressive instruction on the doctrines and duties of religion; while the Confession, the Collects and Prayers, the Litany and Thanksgivings, lead

* The concurrent testimonies of Josephus, Philo, &c. prove the use of prescribed forms of prayer among the Jews. The fact has been undeniably established by the learned Dr. Lightfoot and Dr. Hammond.

† Liturgies ascribed to St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James, which, though not composed by those persons, are certainly of an age very near them, a form of morning and evening prayer in the Apostolical constitutions, and the Liturgies of St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, and St. Ambrose, are still extant.

the understanding and the heart through all the sublime and affecting exercises of devotion. In this truly evangelical and excellent Liturgy, the supreme Lord of the universe is invoked by the most appropriate, affecting, and sublime epithets; all the wants to which man, as a dependent and sinful being, is subject, are expressed in language at once simple, concise, and comprehensive; these wants are urged by confessions the most humble, and supplications the most reverential and ardent; the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, are uniformly urged as the only effectual plea, the only certain pledge of divine mercy and grace; and with the most instructive lessons from the sacred oracles, and the most profound confessions and supplications, is mingled the sublime chorus of praise, begun by the minister, and responded with one heart and one voice from the assembled congregation. The mind, continually passing from one exercise of worship to another, and, instead of one continued and uniform prayer, sending up its wishes and aspirations in short and varied collects and supplications, is never suffered to grow languid or weary. The affections of the worshipper ever kept alive by the tender and animating fervour which breathes through the service, he worships his God and Redeemer in spirit and in truth, with reverence and awe, with lively gratitude and love; the exalted joys of devotion are poured upon his soul; he feels that it is good for him to draw near unto God, and that a day spent in his courts, is better than a thousand passed in the tents of the ungodly.

Q. By whom was the Liturgy of the Church drawn up?

A. The Liturgy of the Church was originally compiled out of the various Liturgies of the primitive Church; and alterations and additions have, at different times, been made by the most eminent divines of the Church of England. In the late revisions of the Book of Common Prayer by the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, that Church was studiously careful "not to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or worship, or further than local circumstances require."[a]

Q. What should be our behaviour during the performance of public worship?

[a] Preface to the Book of Common Prayer.

A. On our first entrance into the Church, we should fall down upon our knees in private prayer to God for the assistance of his holy Spirit in those solemn duties of religion which we come to perform. We should consider that we are in the immediate presence of a God who searches the heart, who cannot be deceived, and who will not be mocked: we should consider that he observes what we think, as well as what we say or do, and should therefore take care that the inward dispositions of our souls, and the outward demeanour of our bodies, be suitable to the sacred duties of his house, and the sanctity of his awful presence. In the ascription of praise we should stand; but, in supplication, a kneeling posture is most proper, being that which is prescribed by the Psalmist,[t] and which is dictated by nature, in solemn adorations and humble confessions.

Q. In what manner do the morning and evening services of the Church commence?

A. Some short sentences out of the holy Scripture are read by the minister. To these the people should diligently hearken, considering them as spoken by the inspiration or command of God himself at first, and now repeated by his minister, to put the people in mind of something which God would have them believe or do. The design of reading these sentences, is not only to bring our sins against God to our remembrance, but also his promises of pardon and forgiveness if we repent, in order that we may be excited to worship him with that reverence and godly fear which becomes those who are sensible of their own sinfulness and unworthiness to approach his divine majesty; and likewise with that faith and humble confidence which become those who believe that, upon our repentance, he will pardon and accept us, according to his promises.

Q. What is the design of the exhortation which follows the sentences?

A. The design of the exhortation is to apply the foregoing sentences, and to direct the congregation how to perform the confession which follows. This is the minister's part alone, and not to be repeated after him by the congregation. It is their duty to take particular notice of every word and expression in it, as contrived on purpose to prepare them for the worship of God, by possessing their minds with a due sense of his special presence, and of the great end of their coming before him.

[t] Psal. xcv. 6.

Q. Why is the general confession placed at the commencement of the prayers?

A. We learn from holy Scripture, that such as would pray with effect always began by confession," to the end that their guilt being removed by penitence, there might be no bar to God's grace and mercy. The Church has, therefore, rightly placed this confession at the beginning of our prayers. It is conceived in a very general form, in order that it may suit the whole congregation; and while they are repeating it sentence by sentence after the minister, they should call to mind their unworthiness and guilt, so as to be heartily sorry for their transgressions, and steadfastly to resolve against them for the time to come; imploring the mercy of God for the pardon of them, and his grace, that from henceforward they may entirely forsake them, and bring forth the fruits of an unfeigned repentance.

Q. What follows the confession?

A. God having committed to his ambassadors the ministry of reconciliation, the Church calls upon them to exercise it now, when the congregation have been humbled by the preceding confession. The priest, therefore, rising from his knees, and standing up, declares and pronounces for their comfort and support, that God pardoneth and absolveth all those who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospe.. While the absolution is thus pronouncing, we should continue upon our knees, and hearken to it with perfect silence, not reading or repeating it along with the priest; for it is the priest's duty alone to make this declaration by authority from God, and in his name, as his ambassador. However, every particular person there present ought humbly and thankfully to apply it to himself, so far as to be fully persuaded in his own mind, that if, after an unfeigned and unshaken belief in Christ, he really and heartily repent, he will be absolved from all the sins he had before committed, as certainly as if God himself had declared it with his own mouth, since his minister has done it in his name, and by his power.

Q. Why does the Lord's Prayer immediately follow the absolution?

A. Looking upon ourselves as absolved from our sins, through a faith that worketh true repentance, we, as reconciled unto God through his Son, have such boldness and access to the throne of divine grace, as by the spirit of adop-

[a] Ezra ix. 5, 6. Dan. ix. 4, 5.

tion to cry out, Abba, Father, (Rom. viii. 15.) in the very form he taught us to pray, saying, *Our Father who art in Heaven*, &c.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the course of the service after the Lord's Prayer?

A. Having recited the Lord's Prayer, we are to lift up our hearts to God in this petition of his minister for his grace, *O Lord, open thou our lips;* to which the answer is, what it ought to be, from the people, *And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.* Then immediately standing up, we put ourselves into a posture of giving praise to the one living and true God, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. For which purpose the minister first says, *Glory be to the Father*, &c.; the people, to show their consent, answer, *As it was in the beginning*, &c. The minister calling again upon the people, *Praise ye the Lord;* and the people answering, *The Lord's name be praised:* we go on accordingly to praise him, by saying or singing the ninety-fifth psalm, and then the psalms appointed for the day. After every one of which, (to testify that it is the same divine Being, three persons and one God, in honour of whom these Psalms were composed, and made use of in the Jewish Church, and who is still praised and worshipped by them in the Christian Church,) we repeat that incomparable hymn, *Glory be to the Father*, &c.

Q. What is the design of the mode of worshipping God by responses, and of the alternate recital of the Psalms by the minister and the people?

A. The design of responses, and the alternate recital of the Psalms, is, by a grateful variety, to quicken the devotion of the congregation, and engage their attention. They, having thus a share in the service, must keep themselves prepared for their parts in it; but if the minister performed the whole, the people might grow heedless, and become unconcerned. Hence, in the ancient Jewish Church, they sung hymns and prayers by courses; and in all the old Christian Liturgies there are short sentences, which, from the people answering the priest, are called *responses.*

Q. Is it not the duty of the congregrtion to repeat audibly the responses, and the other parts assigned to them in the service?

A. When the people neglect audibly to repeat the responses, and the other parts assigned to them, the intention of the service of the Church is defeated, and its beauty and so-

lemnity entirely lost. Every person, therefore, in the congregation, should consider it as a duty incumbent upon him, to repeat audibly the parts in the service allotted to the people: he will thus perform his share in the important and honourable duty of worshipping God; he will find his heart animated, and the impressions of devotion rendered more lively, by the joint and audible recital of the service by both minister and people; and he will have the satisfaction of contributing to exhibit the service of the Church in all its majesty, beauty, and affecting solemnity.

Q. Why are the Psalms recited as a part of the service of the Church?

A. The book of Psalms is a collection of prayers and praises endited by the Holy Spirit, composed by devout men on various occasions, and so suited to public worship, that they have long been so used by Christians, no less than by Jews. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world; the dispensations of providence, and the economy of grace. They contain great variety of devotions, suitable to all degrees and conditions of men. Those of them which do not admit of being applied to individuals, are, nevertheless, very proper for recital, since they are meant by the psalmist to be the voice of the universal Church. In some of his psalms, David speaks as the representative of the Church; in others, he expresses himself in the person of the Messiah.*

Q. Do not the imprecations which occur in some of the Psalms, constitute an objection to the use of them in divine service?

A. The offence taken at the supposed vindictive and uncharitable spirit of the imprecations which occur in some of the psalms, ceases immediately, if we change the imperative for the future, and read, not "*Let them be* confounded," &c. but "*They shall be* confounded," &c. of which the Hebrew is equally capable. Such passages will then have no more difficulty in them than the other frequent predictions of divine vengeance in the writings of the prophets, or denunciations of it in the gospels, which are intended to warn, to alarm, and to lead sinners to repentance, that they may flee from the

* That the Psalms are typical of the Christian dispensation, and meant to be applied to the Messiah, to the Church, and to private Christians, has been satisfactorily proved by Bishop Horne, in his learned Preface to his Commentaray on the Psalms. and he who would see these Psalms admirably applied to the purposes of Christian faith and devotion, should consult the Commentary of this elegant and pious author

wrath to come. But if the imprecatory form be still contended for, all that can be meant by it, whether uttered by the prophet, by Messiah, or by ourselves, must be a solemn ratification of the just judgments of the Almighty against his impenitent adversaries, like what we find ascribed to the blessed spirits in heaven when such judgments were executed.[p] But, by the *future* rendering of the verbs, every possible objection is precluded at once.

Q. What should be the behaviour of the people while the psalms and hymns are repeating?

A. While the psalms and hymns that are used in different places of the service are repeating, the people should attentively observe the minister's part as well as their own, and lift up their hearts together with their voices in acknowledging and praising the glorious attributes of the most high God, as displayed in all his works, and particularly in his dispensation of mercy and grace to the children of men. While engaged in this exalted employment, they should stand up; not only to signify, but also to assist the lifting up of the heart and affections at the same time.

Q. What follow in the service after the psalms?

A. When the heart has been raised up to God, in the sacred exercise of praise, by reciting the psalms, we are then in a fit disposition to hear his holy word. By such change, an agreeable respite or intermission is given to the bent of our minds; for as the thoughts were required to be active in the psalms, it is sufficient, in the lessons, if they hold themselves attentive. Now, therefore, follow *two lessons*, one out of the Old Testament, the other out of the New, to show the harmony between the *law* and the *gospel;* for the *law* is the gospel foreshowed—the *gospel* is the law fulfilled.

Q. What method has the Church pursued in appointing the lessons for ordinary week days?

A. For the lessons on ordinary week days, the Church begins with the first chapter of Genesis, in the month of January, and continues till all the books of the Old Testament are read through, with the exception of certain omissions. The books of Chronicles are omitted, because they are, for the most part, the same with the books of Samuel and Kings. The Song of Solomon is wholly omitted, because it should be read with a disposition to understand it spiritually, and therefore is not a proper piece of writing for a mixed congre-

[p] Rev. xi. 17, 18. xvi. 5, 6, 7.

gation. Isaiah is appointed for the time of Advent, this evangelical prophet being the best monitor to prepare us for a true faith in the mystery of Christ's incarnation and birth. Several chapters in Ezekiel are omitted, on account of the mystical visions in which they are wrapped.

Q. What method has the Church pursued in appointing lessons for Sundays?

A. From Advent to Septuagesima Sunday, the season which the church devotes to the celebration of the incarnation of Christ, and his manifestation to the gentile world, some particular chapters are appointed out of the prophet Isaiah, who predicts, with more clearness and sublimity than any other prophet, those great events. For Septuagesima Sunday, and the following Sundays before Lent, and during that season, being the time of penance and mortification, the Church appoints out of the prophets, chapters which declare the judgments of God against sin, and excite to repentance and reformation. But on the Sundays towards the end of Lent, with a view to pepare for the proper celebration of Good Friday and Easter, the Church reads parts of some of the prophets which immediately refer to the death of Christ, and to his glorious completion of the work of redemption. On the Sundays succeeding Easter, portions of Scripture, to the same evangelical purport, are read, until Trinity Sunday, when Genesis is taken up: and such chapters of this book, and of the succeeding books of Scripture, as are deemed particularly instructive in piety and morals, are continued to the season of Advent.

Q. What method is observed in appointing the lessons for saints' days and other holy days?

A. On saints' days, the Church appoints lessons out of the moral books, such as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, &c. which being full of excellent instruction, are fit to be read on the days of saints, whose exemplary lives and deaths are the causes of the Church commemorating them, and commending them to our imitation. Other holy days, such as Christmas, Circumcision, Epiphany, &c. have proper lessons of their own, suited to the occasions, as will be seen when we come to treat of those days. It may be proper to remark, that there were proper lessons on all holy days, appointed even as early as the time of St. Augustin.

Q. The above observations respect only the first lessons. What have you to remark in regard to the appointment of the second lessons?

A. With respect to the second lessons, the method is, on week days, to read generally the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in the morning, and the Epistles in the evening, both in the order in which they stand in the New Testament. But on Sundays, saints' days, and other holy days, proper lessons, suited to the occasion, are generally appointed.

By the above method of appointing the lessons, the Old Testament, with few exceptions, is read through once, and the New Testament twice, in every year.

Q. With what dispositions should we hear the lessons out of the holy Scriptures read?

A. As the Scripture is not the word of man, but the word of God, we should hearken to the lessons which are read either out of the Old or New Testament, with the same attention, reverence, and faith, as we would have done, had we stood by mount Sinai when God proclaimed the law, or by our Saviour's side when he published the Gospel. But we should hear in order to practise, and be doers of the word, and not hearers only. We should therefore diligently observe, in those portions of Scripture which are read, what the particular sins are against which God warns us; what the doctrines which he requires us to believe; and what the duties which he commands us to perform. When we retire home, we should seriously meditate on the Scriptures which we have heard read, in order to apply them to the government and regulation of our hearts and lives.

Q. Why are hymns appointed to succeed the lessons?

A. Hymns and psalms are intermingled with the lessons, to secure the people from weariness, and to keep alive their devout affections. It is indeed highly proper, that, after we have declared, in the lessons, the wonderful works of God and his gracious dispensation of mercy, we should burst forth in ascriptions of praise and homage, and in expressions of thankfulness for the exalted blessings of his word.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the hymns which follow the first lessons?

A. The two hymns after the first lesson at morning prayer, are that sublime hymn, the TE DEUM, *We praise thee, O God*, &c. which, it is generally believed, was composed by St. Ambrose; and the BENEDICTE, *O all ye works of the Lord*, which is an exact paraphrase of the 148th psalm, and was a hymn in the Jewish Church, and early adopted into the public devotions of Christians. The first hymn after the

first lesson at evening prayer, is the 98th psalm, which, though composed on occasion of the deliverances God wrought for the Jewish nation, may very aptly be applied to Christians who are God's spiritual Israel, and who are bound to praise him for their glorious deliverance from the bondage of sin and death. The second hymn which may be used, is part of the 92d psalm, and is a beautiful and affecting exhortation to the duty of praise to God for all the operations of his hands.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the hymns after the second lessons?

A. As the second lessons are all taken out of the New Testament, which conveys to us the glad tidings of salvation, the hymns which follow these lessons, all celebrate the goodness and mercy of God in our redemption. The first hymn after the second lesson in the morning, is the 100th psalm, which calls upon us to praise God, not only for his goodness and power manifested in our creation and preservation, but for that grace, mercy, and truth, which in his everlasting Gospel are set forth, from generation to generation. The other hymn, styled BENEDICTUS, was pronounced by Zecharias, at the circumcision of his son, John the Baptist, and is a lively thanksgiving to God for the incarnation of Christ, and for the unspeakable mercies of redemption. After the second lesson in the evening service, the first hymn, the 67th psalm, is an earnest prayer of David for the coming of the Gospel; and the other hymn, part of the 103d psalm, is a sublime and animated act of thanksgiving for the mercies of redemption actually conferred on mankind.

Q. Is there not great propriety in the order observed by the Church, in placing the creeds and prayers after the lessons?

A. As "faith comes by hearing,"[w] it seems proper, that after the lessons, which declare to us the word of God, should follow the Creed, which is the profession of our faith; and after the Creed follow prayers, which are grounded upon faith; for "how shall we call on him, in whom we have not believed?"

Q. Do not both minister and people join in repeating the Creed?

A. Both minister and people join in repeating the Creed

[w] Rom. x. 17.

because it is designed to be the profession of every one present, and also that they may the more expressly declare their belief of it to each other, and to the whole Christian world with whom they maintain communion. It is to be repeated standing, to signify our resolution to maintain and defend it. At the second article of this Creed, when the name of Jesus is mentioned, the whole congregation make obeisance, in compliance with an ancient custom of the Church, probably founded on the command of St. Paul, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.[x]

Q. Why are the Apostles' and Nicene Creed so called?

A. The Apostles' Creed is so called, because the greatest part of it was derived from the very days of the Apostles; and the Nicene Creed is so called, as being, for the most part, drawn up by the first council of Nice.[y] The Nicene Creed was designed to establish more fully the divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, against the heresies which began to prevail in the Church.

Q. Are not the different parts of the service which have now been explained, admirably calculated to prepare the people for the remaining part of divine worship, supplication and prayer?

A. After our consciences are absolved from sin, our affections warmed with thanksgiving, our understandings enlightened by the word, and our faith strengthened by a public profession of the Creed, we are prepared to enter on the remaining part of divine worship, supplication and prayer—to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul.

Q. Explain that part of the service which immediately succeeds the Creed.

A. Since neither minister nor people can possibly pray to God aright without his grace and assistance, the minister first prays for the special presence of God with the people, saying, *The Lord be with you;* and they put up the same petition to the minister, who is to be their representative before the throne of grace, answering, *And with thy spirit.* The minister then says, *Let us pray*—a form which, after the custom of the old Liturgies, is several times repeated through the service, in order to awaken the attention of the people, and to warn them to lay aside all wanderings, and to accompany the minister with their thoughts and affections. Both

x Philipp. ii. 10. y A. D. 325.

minister and people then adore God, and, by turns, lift up their hearts to him in short ejaculations, beseeching him to show them his mercy and salvation, to renew their hearts, and to grant them the presence of his holy Spirit.

Q. What are the advantages of dividing the public devotions into collects or short prayers, instead of presenting them in one continued prayer?

A. The division of that part of the service which consists in supplication and petition, into collects or short prayers, tends, by the variety which is thus exhibited, to excite and keep up the devotion of the people. Every one of these short prayers beginning with some of the attributes or perfections of God, our minds, by this repetition, are more strongly fixed on the particular attribute which is suited to the petition we may then be offering up. The conclusion of each prayer also—*through Jesus Christ our Lord*—being frequently repeated, the important truth is by this method more strongly impressed upon us, that it is only through the mediation of Jesus Christ that we can have access unto the Father.

Q. Why are these short prayers styled collects?

A. These short prayers are styled *collects*, most probably because in them the minister collects or comprises all the wants of the people, and presents them unto God. The same reason will apply to the collect for the day, which always contains such matters as may be collected from the epistle and gospel.

Q. Is there not a particular office appointed to be used on certain days, instead of some of these prayers or collects?

A. A particular office, styled the *Litany*, or *general supplication*, is appointed to be used instead of some of the prayers, on the morning of Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday. This Litany, whether we consider its simple, chaste, sublime and affecting language, or the importance and variety of the matter with which it abounds—the solemnity of the invocations of the sacred persons of the Trinity with which it commences—the earnestness of the deprecations which it contains of the punishment of sin, of all temporal and spiritual evil—the importunity of the affecting entreaties by which we implore the blessed Redeemer, the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world, to hear and deliver us, to grant us his mercy and peace—the justness and variety of the intercessions and alternate supplications by which we implore for

ourselves and others, all necessary blessings, both temporal and spiritual—in all these points of view, this Litany may be pronounced one of the most sublime, affecting, and animating offices of devotion that can possibly be formed. By its variety, its force, and its penetrating fervour, it is calculated to arrest the attention of the careless, to animate and exalt the devotion of the pious, and to engage all the powers of the soul in the most exalted acts of homage and supplications.

Q. What should be our behaviour while the minister is offering up the prayers and the litany?

A. While the minister is offering up the prayers and the litany, we ought not to sit, or place ourselves in any other irreverent posture, but continue on our knees, being the posture which becomes sinful and unworthy creatures, when addressing their great and almighty Creator. We ought not to repeat the prayers aloud, but we should accompany the minister, in our mind and affections, from one prayer to another, and from one part of each prayer to the other; humbly adoring and praising God according to the names, attributes, and works which are attributed to him at the beginning of each prayer; earnestly desiring the blessings which are asked of him either for ourselves or others, and steadfastly relying on the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ for the obtaining of them. At the conclusion of every collect and prayer also, we are to testify our sincere joining in it by a solemn *amen*, which signifies *so be it*, or, *thus I heartily pray God it may be.* We are to join in the litany, by repeating aloud, with humble but earnest importunity, the several answers, *Good Lord, deliver us—We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord*, and the other parts assigned to us. In this manner we make our own, the various supplications, &c. which the minister recites in that affecting service.

Q. What have you to remark in regard to the general thanksgiving?

A. Having in the collects, or litany, prayed for all necessary blessings for ourselves and others, it is but fit we should praise God also for those mercies we have already received; and give thanks, not only in behalf of ourselves, but, according to the Apostle's direction, for all mankind; which we do, toward the end of the service, in the general thanksgiving. Here, if we have any special or particular mercy which calls for thankfulness to God, we should gratefully remember it, and secretly in our hearts return our

thanks for it, when we come to that passage, *Thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men.* But we should stir up our affections to the utmost fervency that is possible, when we praise God for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory; for as these are the greatest blessings he could bestow upon us, the thankful acknowledgment of them is one of the chief ends of our coming together in Christian assemblies: and we should not only heartily pray, but sincerely resolve and endeavour to show our sense of these, and of all God's other mercies, by our holy and obedient lives.

Q. In what manner does the common daily service end?

A. After the general thanksgiving succeeds the prayer of St. Chrysostom; and then the minister alone concludes, kneeling, with the prayer, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, &c. In this prayer is comprehended all we have desired, or can desire, to make us completely happy, both now and for ever.

Q. Is there not, on Sundays and Holy Days, an addition to the common daily service?

A. On Sundays and holy days, though there be no actual communion, the Church enjoins the communion service to be read to the end of the gospel, concluding with the blessing.[a]

Q. Why does the minister read the ten commandments, at the beginning of the communion service, standing?

As the minister pronounces the ten commandments in the name of God, to express the greater authority, he reads them standing.

Q. How should the congregation be engaged during the reading of the commandments?

A. As the awful declaration of God's will in the ten commandments should be heard with the greatest reverence, and as the Church directs us, at the end of each commandment, to beg the mercy of God, and the assistance of his grace, we should humbly and reverently kneel during this part of the service. It is our business audibly to pronounce the short prayer which follows each commandment, begging pardon of God with deep and true contrition, and with seriousness and earnestness beseeching him to incline our hearts to keep his laws.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the collect, epistle, and gospel, which succeed the ten commandments?

[a] Rubric at the end of the communion service.

A. The reading of portions out of the epistles and gospels is a very ancient usage in the Church. The epistles and gospels now in use were, it is thought, selected by St. Jerome[a]; and the collects are believed to be of equal antiquity, and perhaps framed by that father of the Church. It may be remarked, that as our Saviour's disciples "went before his face to every city and place, whither he himself would come[b]," so here the epistle, as the word of the servants, is read first, that it may be as a harbinger to the gospel, to which, as being the word of Christ, their great Master, the last place and greatest honour are reserved. Though the congregation sit during the reading of the epistle, they stand while the gospel is read, paying this particular mark of reverence to the record of what our blessed Lord did, spake, or suffered for our salvation.

Q. In order to the more judicious arrangement of the epistles and gospels, has not the Church divided the year into two great portions?

A. For the more judicious arrangement of the epistles and gospels, the Church has divided the year into two parts: the former takes in the period from Advent to Trinity Sunday, and the latter comprises all the Sundays from Trinity to Advent.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the former portion of the year, and the object of the epistles and gospels that are appointed for it?

A. The design of the former portion of the year, is to commemorate Christ's living among us. Beginning at Advent, we first celebrate his incarnation in general; and, after that, the several particulars of it in their order: his nativity, circumcision, and manifestation to the Gentiles; his doctrine and miracles; his baptism, fasting, and temptation; his agony and bloody sweat; his cross and passion; his precious death and burial; his glorious resurrection and ascension; and his sending the Holy Ghost to comfort us. As during this period, therefore, it is the design of the Church to celebrate the agency of the blessed Trinity in the work of our redemption, the chief end of the epistles and gospels is to make us remember what unspeakable benefits we receive from the Father, first by his Son, and then by the Holy Ghost; accordingly, this portion of the year is very aptly concluded on Trinity Sunday, by giving praise and glory to the whole blessed Trinity.

[a] Jerome flourished A. D. 378. [b] Luke x. 1.

Q. What is the design of the latter portion of the year, and of the epistles and gospels that are appointed for it?

A. The design of the latter portion of the year, is to instruct us to live after the example of Christ. Having, in the first part of the year, learned the mysteries of our religion, we are taught, in the second, what we are to practise, that we may build upon our faith a holy and virtuous life. The epistles and gospels, therefore, for this portion of the year, are such as most easily and plainly instruct and lead us in the true paths of Christianity.

Q. Is it not the duty of the congregation to join in the psalms that are sung during the service?

A. The singing of psalms being an important and delightful part of public worship, it is the duty of the congregation unitedly to join in it. The melody of the voice should always express and cherish the thankfulness which should inspire our hearts when recounting the praises of our God and Saviour.

Q. When a sermon is delivered, with what dispositions ought we to hear it?

A. However frail and unworthy the ministering servants of the sanctuary may be, yet, as they bear the commission of God, and are appointed by him to promulgate the terms of salvation, we should listen to their instructions with humble and earnest attention; and our prayers should be directed to God, that he would impress the truths which they may deliver, on our hearts, to our conviction, our consolation, and our growth in holiness and virtue.

Q. Is it not incumbent on us to be present in the Church at the commencement of the service?

A. It is our duty to attend to the whole of the public worship of the Church. If we miss the beginning of the service, we lose the opportunity of confessing our sins, and the comfort of hearing our pardon declared. To come into the Church after the commencement of the service, disturbs the devotion of the congregation, and discovers very criminal carelessness and irreverence.

Q. Should we not, on our first entrance into the Church, secretly address God in prayer?

A. On our first entrance into the Church, we should secretly, on our knees, address God in prayer, for the aids of his holy Spirit to worship him acceptably. The following prayer for this purpose may be used.

Almighty God, who dost vouchsafe to dwell in temples made with hands, teach me now to act as in thy immediate presence, and enable me to worship thee in spirit and in truth. By the gracious influences of thy holy Spirit, help my infirmities, and dispose my heart to seriousness, attention, and devotion; that this opportunity of worshipping thee, O God, in thy holy temple, may tend to the honour of thy holy name, and the benefit of my soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Q. Should we not secretly address God in prayer after the conclusion of the service?

A. After the minister has pronounced the blessing, we should continue some time upon our knees, humbly beseeching Almighty God to pardon what he has seen amiss in us since we came into his presence, and graciously to hear the prayers, and accept the praises which we have offered to him. For this purpose, the following prayer may be used.

Blessed be thy name, O God, for this opportunity of worshipping thee in thy holy temple. Pardon my wanderings and imperfections: hear and accept my prayers and praises. May the truths of salvation sink deep into my heart, and exhibit in my life the fruits of holiness and virtue: and may the worship and services of thy Church on earth, prepare me for the exalted services of thy temple and Church eternal in the heavens, through Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

ADVENT SUNDAYS.

FESTIVALS.

Q. WHAT *do you mean by Advent Sundays?*

A. Advent Sundays are the four Sundays that precede the great festival of our Saviour's nativity; Advent being the season appointed by the Church to prepare our minds, by proper meditations, for a due commemoration of Christ's coming in the flesh.

Q. When is the first Sunday in Advent?

A. The first Sunday in Advent is always the nearest Sunday to the feast of St. Andrew, whether before or after.

Q. Does not the Church compute the beginning of the year at this time of Advent?

A. The Church computes the beginning of the year, and renews the annual course of her services, at this season of Advent. She does not number her days, or measure her seasons, so much by the motion of the sun, as by the course of her Saviour, that true Sun of righteousness, who began now to rise upon the world, and, as the day-star on high, to enlighten those who sat in spiritual darkness.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the epistles and gospels appointed for these Sundays?

A. The epistles and gospels are all very ancient, and very proper for the time. They assure us of the truth of Christ's first coming; and, as a proper means to bring our lives to a conformity with the end and design of it, they point out to us the prospect of his second coming, when he will execute vengeance on all those who obey not his Gospel.

Q. With what temper of mind ought we to commemorate the great blessing of Christ's coming in the flesh?

A. We should commemorate the great blessing of Christ's coming in the flesh, with firm purposes and sincere resolutions of conforming ourselves to the end and design of our Saviour's coming into the world. For, since the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil,[c] the great care and business of our lives should be, to avoid every thing that is evil, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and not

[c] 1 John iii. 8.

suffer sin to reign in our mortal bodies, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof.[d] Since he gave himself for us, to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,[e] we should give all diligence to add to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; for if these things be in us, and abound, we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.[f]

Q. What consideration doth the Church offer, to induce us to bring our lives to a conformity with the design of Christ's coming in the flesh?

A. The consideration of his second coming to judge the world, when he will execute vengeance upon all those who obey not the Gospel, is presented to us in the services of Advent, to induce us to conform ourselves to the design of Christ's first coming, which was, that he might purify us unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Q. What do you mean by Christ's coming to judgment?

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ shall, at the end of the world, descend from heaven in his human nature, and summon all mankind to appear before his tribunal, where they shall have all their actions strictly examined, and, according to the nature of them, be adjudged to eternal happiness or eternal misery.

Q. Doth not reason render probable a general judgment?

A. The light of nature discovers to us an essential difference between good and evil; whence, by the common consent of mankind, rewards are affixed to the one, and punishments to the other; and as men govern their actions in relation to these essential differences of good and evil, so are their hopes and their fears. The practice of virtue is attended not only with present quiet and satisfaction, but with the comfortable hope of a future recompence; the commission of any wicked action, however secret, fills the mind with horror and remorse. This sensibility of conscience would be very unaccountable, without the natural apprehension and acknowledgment of future rewards and punishments. The dispensations of God's providence towards men in this world are apparently very unjust; good men often suffer even for the sake of righteousness, and bad men as frequently prosper and flourish by the means of their

[d] Rom. vi. 12. [e] Tit. ii. 14. [f] 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7, 8

wickedness: so that, to vindicate the justice of God's proceedings, it seems reasonable there should be a future judgment, for a suitable distribution of rewards and punishments.

Q. How does it appear from Scripture that there shall be a general judgment?

A. God hath given assurance unto all men, that he will judge the world by Jesus Christ, in that he raised him from the dead.[g] The process of the great day,[h] with several of the particular circumstances of it, are fully described by our Saviour. St. Paul declares expressly, that we must all appear, and stand before the judgment-seat of Christ;[i] St. Peter, that the day of the Lord shall come, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.[j] No doctrine appears more clear, and express, and fundamental, in the word of God, than that of a general judgment.

Q. When shall this general judgment be?

A. The general judgment shall take place at the end of the world. When the state of our trial and probation shall be finished, it will be a proper season for the distribution of public justice; for rewarding all those with eternal life, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; and for rendering to them that obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish.[k]

Q. But if every man, upon his death, passes into a state of happiness or misery, what need is there of a general judgment?

A. Though it is plain from Scripture, that good men, when they die, pass into a state of happiness, and bad men into a state of misery; yet all the declarations of our Saviour and his apostles concerning the judgment, with the parables that relate to it, plainly refer to the last and general judgment; for then it is only that the whole man shall be completely happy, or completely miserable: then it is that the bodies of men shall be raised; and as they have been partakers with the soul, either in obeying or offending God, so shall they then share in the rewards or punishments of it. Then it is that the reasonableness of God's providence, in relation to the sufferings of good men in this world, will be fully justified, and his goodness as amply vin-

g Acts xvii. 31. h Matt. xxv. i Rom. xiv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 10
j 2 Pet. iii. 10. k Rom. ii. 7, 8, 9.

dicated in those severe punishments that shall be eternally inflicted upon the wicked. Moreover, this general judgment is necessary, to display the majesty and glory of our blessed Saviour; that, by this public act of honour and authority, he may receive some recompense for the contempt and ignominy which he met with from a wicked and ungrateful world; and that his despised servants may be owned by him in the sight of angels and men; that public justice may be done to those virtues which their humility took care to conceal, and which were sullied by the calumnies and slanders of malicious men.

Q. To whom hath God committed the administration of this judgment?

A. The Lord Jesus Christ is constituted by God to administer the judgment of the great day. God will judge the world in righteousness by that man Jesus Christ, whom he hath ordained.[l] The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works.[m] The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.[n] The apostles were commanded to preach unto the people, and testify, that it is Jesus who is ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.[o]

Q. Why is the administration of this judgment committed to the Lord Jesus Christ?

A. The administration of the general judgment is committed to our blessed Saviour, in order that he may receive public honour in that nature wherein he suffered; that he, who, for our sakes, stood before an earthly tribunal, may be constituted judge of the whole world; that he, who was despised and rejected of men, may appear in the glory of his Father, attended with an innumerable train of holy angels; that he, who was condemned and crucified to absolve us, may receive authority to absolve and condemn the whole race of mankind.

Q. Who are those that shall be judged?

A. Angels and all mankind shall be judged. The fallen angels are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.[p] All men that have ever lived in the world, and those that shall be alive at our Saviour's coming, shall be gathered before him,[q] who is or-

l Acts xvii. 31. *m* Matt. xvi. 27. *n* John v. 22.
o Acts x 42. *p* Jude, ver. 6. *q* Matt. xxv. 32.

dained by God to be judge of quick and dead,[r] and they shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, both small and great. Power shall not exempt the kings of the earth and the great men, neither shall meanness excuse the poorest slave.[s]

Q. For what shall we be judged?

A. We shall be judged for all things which we have done in the body, whether they be good or bad.[t] All our thoughts, words, and actions, shall then undergo the severest scrutiny.

Q. By what measures shall the sentence of the great day pass upon men?

A. The sentence of the last day shall pass upon men according to the nature and quality of their actions. The wicked shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.[u]

Q. But will the degrees of their good and bad actions be considered, as well as the nature and quality of them?

A. The Scripture plainly and expressly asserts, that the rewards and punishments of the next life shall bear a proportion to the good or evil men have done in this. That servant which knew his master's will, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; for to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required:[v] he that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully.[w] In the parable of the talents, our Saviour plainly teaches us, that men are rewarded according to the improvements they make. He that had gained ten talents, is made ruler over ten cities; and he that had gained five talents, ruler over five cities.[x] St. Paul expressly affirms, that the glory of the saints shall be different at the resurrection.[y] The more conformed any man is to the divine image, the greater capacity he has for the enjoyment of God; and the more advanced he is in wickedness, the more susceptible he is of torment, the more deserving of divine wrath.

Q. Is the time fixed for our Saviour's coming to judgment?

A. The time and season for that great judgment is appointed by God, and reserved as a secret to himself. Of

r Acts x. 42. s Rev. xi. 18. vi. 15. Job xxxiv. 19. t 2 Cor. v. 10.
u Matt. xxv. 46. v Luke xii. 47, 48. w 2 Cor. ix. 6. x Luke xix. 16, &c.
y 1 Cor. xv. 41.

hat day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.[z] The angels, who excel in knowledge, and shall administer in all the solemnities of the last judgment, are yet ignorant of the time fixed for that awful event. Christ, who is himself to be the judge, and who, as God, knows all things, yet, as the Son of man, knows not the time which the Father hath appointed for the judgment of the world.

Q. What shall be the manner and the circumstances of Christ's appearing?

A. Christ, the judge of the world, shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels;[a] he shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God;[b] he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and in that of his holy angels;[c] he shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him, and he shall separate them, the one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.[d] Those that sleep in the grave shall awake, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and they that are alive shall be changed, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air.[e] Glorious shall be the appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ;[f] glorious in respect of the brightness and splendour of his celestial body, made still more glorious and majestic by the authority which his Father hath committed to him of universal judge; glorious in his retinue, being accompanied with thousands of holy angels, who shall attend not only to make up the pomp of his appearance, but as ministers of his justice; and glorious, lastly, in that bright throne of glory, from whence he shall dispense life and death to all the world.

Q. What may we learn from the certainty of a general judgment?

A. From the certainty of a general judgment we should learn,—to govern our lives with such care and consideration, that we may be able to give up our account with joy, and not with grief; to keep such strict watch over ourselves, by frequent examination, that our demeanour, in this state of probation and trial, may obtain the favour and acceptance of our Judge at his dreadful tribunal; to restrain ourselves from committing the least sin, because there is none so in-

z Mark xiii. 32. a 2 Thess. i. 7. b 1 Thess. iv. 16.
c Luke ix. 26. d Matt. xxv. 31, 32.
e 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. 1 Cor xv 51. f Tit. ii. 13.

considerable as to be overlooked by the omniscient Witness and Judge of our actions; not to encourage ourselves, by the greatest secrecy, to the breach of any of God's holy laws, because all our actions shall be then exposed to the view of an assembled universe; not to be dejected by the slanders and calumnies of bad men, because our integrity shall then be cleared by him who cannot err in judgment. The consideration of a final judgment should teach us,—to improve all those talents which the providence of God has intrusted to us, because we are but stewards, and must give an account of them; to be sincere in all our words and actions, because, in that day, the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed; to avoid all rash judging of others, because he that judgeth another, shall not escape the judgment of God; and to abound in all good works, because our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Q. What should we learn from the uncertainty of the time when we shall be judged?

A. The consideration of the uncertainty of the time when we shall be judged should teach us,—immediately to reconcile ourselves to God by a sincere and hearty repentance, that the terrible day of God's wrath may not find us unprepared; to be always upon our guard, that we may make a daily progress towards Christian perfection, and constantly defend ourselves against the attacks of our spiritual enemies; to be frequent in all acts of piety and devotion, that when we are summoned to appear, we may, if possible, be found employed in religious exercises; and to implore constantly God's grace, that the day of judgment may not overtake us unawares, but that, by a patient continuance in well-doing, we may wait for glory, honour, and immortality.

CHAPTER III.

ST. ANDREW, NOVEMBER 30.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHY *does the Church celebrate the festival of St. Andrew at the beginning of Advent?*

A. As St. Andrew was the first who found the Messiah,[e] and the first who brought others to him, the Church, for his greater honour, commemorates him first in her anniversary course of holy days, placing his festival at the beginning of Advent, as the most proper to bring the news of our Saviour's coming.

Q. Of what parentage and country was the apostle St. Andrew?

A. St. Andrew was born at Bethsaida, a city of Galilee;[h] was son to Jonas, a fisherman of that town; and was brother to Simon Peter.

Q. How came our Saviour to choose his disciples out of Galilee?

A. Our Saviour chose his disciples out of Galilee, because it was the chief scene of his ministry. Our Saviour was brought up at Nazareth, a city of Galilee;[i] he began his solemn publication of the Gospel at Capernaum, the metropolis of Galilee; he preached all round the region of Galilee;[j] he began his miracles at Cana, in Galilee;[k] he was transfigured at mount Tabor, a mount of Galilee;[l] our Saviour's ordinary residence was in Galilee; and he appoints his disciples to come to see him in Galilee, when he was risen from the dead.[m]

Q. Was our Saviour's vouchsafing his principal abode to the province of Galilee, any testimony of his being the Messias?

A. The prophecy of Isaiah[n] plainly refers to Galilee, as the place where the Messiah should be born; and to this purpose it is quoted by St. Matthew, when our Saviour made Capernaum the seat of his preaching.[o] The people of Galilee, or of Zebulun and Naphtali, were carried into captivity by

[e] John i. 38, 39, &c. [h] John i. 44. [i] Luke i. 26. Matt. ii. 23.
[j] Matt. iv. 13, 23. [k] John ii. 11. [l] Matt. xvii. 1, 2.
[m] Matt. xxvi 32 [n] Isa. ix. 1, 2, 3. [o] Matt. iv. 14, 15.

the Assyrians;[p] to comfort them under this calamity, Isaiah assures them, that in recompense of the misery they suffered above the rest of their brethren, they should have the first and chief share of the presence and conversation of the Messiah who was to come.

Q. How came St. Andrew acquainted with our Saviour?

A. Being with John the Baptist one day as Jesus passed by, and hearing him say, that he was the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world,[q] St. Andrew follows our Saviour, upon this testimony, to the place of his abode; hearing his instructions, and improving his faith by conversing with him.

Q. What was the first effect of his faith in the Messiah?

A. St. Andrew went to his brother Simon, and imparted to him the joyful news, that he had found the desire of the world,[r] the Christ who was promised by the prophets, and carried him immediately to Jesus, where, after a short stay, they returned again to their own houses, and exercised their calling.

Q. When did St. Andrew become our Saviour's disciple and constant attendant?

A. St. Andrew became our Saviour's disciple and constant attendant about a year afterwards, when, being fully convinced of the greatness and divinity of our Saviour's person by the miraculous draught of fishes, our Saviour commanded him, with his brother Peter, to follow him, promising to make them fishers of men.[s] They accordingly left all, and constantly attended our Saviour's person, and were afterwards called by him to the office and honour of the apostolate.

Q. How and where did St. Andrew suffer martyrdom?

A. After this blessed apostle had planted the Gospel in Scythia and the neighbouring countries, and by his indefatigable labours had converted many to the faith, he came at last to Patræ, in Achaia. By his boldness and zeal in proclaiming the Gospel, he enraged the proconsul of Achaia against him, who commanded him to be scourged, and then to be crucified; and that his death might be the more lingering, he was fastened to the cross,* not with nails, but with cords. He endured martyrdom with the greatest cheerful-

p Kings xv. 29. q John i. 36, 37. r John i. 41. s Matt. iv. 19.

* The cross was in the form of the letter X; and this cross is hence known by the name of *St. Andrew's cross*

ness and triumph, joyfully saluting the cross on which he was to suffer as soon as he came in sight of it, and continuing to instruct and exhort the people, even under the agonies of a lingering death.

Q. What may we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. The readiness with which St. Andrew forsook all to follow Christ, should excite us to forsake all sinful pursuits and pleasures, and to follow that blessed Saviour, whose service leads to present peace and everlasting enjoyment. The zeal which St. Andrew discovered in imparting to his brother Simon the joyful news that he had found the Messiah, and the boldness and activity with which he proclaimed the Gospel, should teach us earnestly to endeavour to make all our relations, friends, and dependents, followers of the blessed Jesus, and to embrace every opportunity of inculcating the necessity and importance of religion, and the happiness which attends it. The patience and cheerfulness which he discovered under his sufferings and persecutions, should teach us to bear affliction and persecution with a patient and resolute mind, entirely resigned to the will of God, and even rejoicing when we are accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.

Q. With what temper of mind ought good men to suffer for the cause of religion?

A. When good men are called to suffer for the cause of religion, they should sustain their sufferings with firmness, that they may not grow faint and weary; with meekness, that they may not grow angry and bitter against their persecutors; with charity, that they may overcome evil with good; with trust in God's providence, that they may be supported under their sufferings by his grace, and delivered in his good time; with joy and thankfulness, inasmuch as, by suffering, they are conformed to Christ their Maker, and when his glory shall be revealed, they shall be made glad with exceeding joy.[t]

[t] 1 Pet. iv. 13.

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CHAPTER IV.

ST. THOMAS, DECEMBER 21.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHY *does the church celebrate the festival of St. Thomas immediately before the Nativity?*

A. St. Thomas, though at first unbelieving, was at length convinced of our Lord's resurrection by the greatest possible evidence; and this evidence the church recommends as a fit preparative to our Lord's nativity, to incline us to believe with St. Thomas, that the Jesus whose birth we are to commemorate, is the very Christ, or, in the words of St. Thomas, our Lord and our God.

Q. Of what country and kindred was the apostle St. Thomas?

A. St. Thomas, whose sirname was Didymus, was a Jew, and probably a Galilean; and it is very likely he was brought up a fisherman.[u]

Q. After he was called to be an apostle, what proof did he give of his willingness to adhere to our Saviour?

A. When the rest of the apostles dissuaded our Saviour from returning into Judea (whither he was resolved to go, to raise Lazarus from the dead,) lest the Jews should stone him, as they had before attempted, St. Thomas desires the apostles not to hinder Christ's journey hither;[v] Let us also go, that we may die with him,[w] saith he; probably concluding, that, instead of raising Lazarus from the dead, they themselves should be sent with him to their own graves.

Q. How did our Saviour treat the slowness of understanding which St. Thomas on a certain occasion evidenced?

A. When our Saviour, a little before his cruel sufferings, was speaking to his disciples of the joys of heaven, and of his going to prepare a place for them, St. Thomas professed that he knew not whither he went, much less the way that led to it.[x] Jesus, with the greatest mildness and gentleness, gave him the short but satisfactory answer, that he was the true living way,[y] the person whom the Father had sent into the world to show men, by his doctrine and by his example,

u John xxi. 2, 3. v John xi. 8, &c. w John xi. 16
x John xiv. 5. y John xiv. 6.

the paths of eternal life; and that they could not fail to reach heaven, if they did but keep to that way which he had prescribed.

Q. What may we learn from this conduct of our Saviour?

A. From this behaviour of our Saviour to Thomas we may learn, that where the mind is rightly disposed, we ought to bear with the heaviness of the understanding, and to endeavour, with gentleness and patience, to instruct and convince the ignorant and doubtful.

Q. What proof did St. Thomas require of our Saviour's resurrection?

A. St. Thomas would not believe the resurrection of Christ but on the testimony of his own senses; for though the rest of the apostles assured him they had really seen their Master alive again, yet he professed, except he should see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side, he would not believe.[a]

Q. How did our Saviour remove this infidelity of St. Thomas?

A. Compassionating the weakness of St. Thomas, and willing to satisfy the doubts and scruples of a sincere though unbelieving man, our Saviour appeared to his disciples again, when St. Thomas was with them, and gave him the satisfaction which he desired.[a] Being quickly convinced of his error, he acknowledged Christ to be his very Lord and Master, a God omnipotent, thus able to rescue himself from the powers of death.

Q. What reply did our Saviour make to this profession of St. Thomas' faith?

A. To this profession which St. Thomas made of his faith, our Saviour replied, that he did well to believe upon this testimony of his senses; but that it was a more noble and commendable act of faith, to acquiesce in a rational evidence,[b] and to receive the doctrines and revelations of the Gospel upon such moral evidence of their truth, as should always satisfy every wise and reasonable man.

Q. What benefit resulted from this instance of unbelief in St. Thomas?

A. This unbelief of St. Thomas serves to confirm our faith in our Saviour's resurrection, by proving, beyond all doubt or scruple, that the very same body of our Lord was raised, in which he suffered.

[a] John xx. 25. [a] John xx. 26, 27. [b] John xx. 29.

Q. Where did St. Thomas preach the Gospel?

A. The province allotted to St. Thomas for the exercise of his apostolical office, was Parthia;[c] he published the glad tidings of salvation to the Medes, Persians, &c. and at last came to the Indies, in which country he suffered martyrdom.

Q. What may we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. From the gentleness with which our Saviour treated the dulness of understanding which St. Thomas on a certain occasion displayed, we may learn, that, provided our minds sincerely intend God's service, and our affections are fixed upon him as our chief good, he will compassionate the weakness of our understandings, and either pardon our errors, or deliver us from them. From the readiness which St. Thomas expresed to follow Christ even to death, we may learn, that no dangers should discourage us from adhering to our blessed Master, and that even death itself should not be able to separate us from him; and from the declaration of Christ to St. Thomas, who was convinced only by the evidence of his senses, we may learn that faith ought to be the prevailing principle of a Christian, under all events, and in every condition of human life; and that a faith founded upon sufficient testimony, is in fact more praiseworthy and exalted than that which is founded on the evidence of the senses: Blessed are they which have not seen, and yet believe.[d]

Q. What is meant by faith in Christ?

A. Faith in Christ means, in general, a sincere belief of every thing which is declared to us concerning him in his Gospel; but more particularly, it means a sincere and supreme reliance on his merits and grace, as the only means of restoration to the favour of God: and when this faith is made the governing principle of our lives, when it works by love, and brings forth the fruits of holiness, it is then imputed unto us for righteousness.

Q. What are those properties that fit faith to produce the fruits of holiness?

A. To produce these effects, faith must be real and unfeigned; it must be hearty and affectionate; it must be sincere and resolute.

[c] Euseb. lib. iii. c. 1. [d] John xx. 29

CHAPTER V.

The Nativity of our Lord, or the Birth-Day of CHRIST, commonly called CHRISTMAS DAY, *December* 25.

FESTIVALS.

Q. WHAT festival does the Church celebrate this day?

A. The Church, this day, celebrates the great festival of the nativity of our Saviour Jesus Christ; or the appearance of the Son of God in the flesh.

Q. What authority have we for the observation of this festival?

A. For the observation of this festival, we have the authority of the primitive Church; for though we have no certain evidence of the exact time when it was first observed, yet it was certainly very early observed all over the West. The immemorial observation of it, is a proof of its primitive institution. It is a matter of inferior moment, whether the twenty-fifth of December be the real anniversary of Christ's birth: the only matter of real importance is, that a particular day be set apart for celebrating, with proper gratitude and devotion, the blessed event of the Saviour's nativity.

Q. What provision has the church made for celebrating this day with proper solemnity and devotion?

A. The church both excites and assists our devotion, by the particular service appointed for the day. In the first lessons,[e] she reads to us the clearest prophecies of Christ's coming in the flesh; and in the second lessons,[f] and in the epistle and gospel, she shows us the completion of those prophecies, by giving us the entire history of his birth. In the collect, she teaches us to pray that we may be partakers of the benefits of his birth; and in the proper psalms, she employs us in our duty of praising and glorifying God for this incomprehensible mystery.* The epistle and gospel for the day were used in the most ancient liturgies.

e First Lessons. For the Morning, Isa. ix. to ver. 8. For the Evening, Isa. vii. ver. 10 to ver. 17.

f Second Lessons. For the Morning, Luke ii. to ver. 15. For the Evening, Tit iii. ver. 4 to ver. 9.

* The evangelical import of the psalms appointed for Christmas Day, will be found admirably explained by Bishop Horne, in his Commentary upon them.

Q. What are we to believe concerning the birth of our Saviour Christ?

A. In the fulness of that time, which was long before appointed in the eternal counsel of God, the holy Jesus, by the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost, was conceived and born of the Virgin Mary, who was of the house and lineage of David. The Saviour was born of a woman, and thus, though without sin, made subject to the law, that, by his obedience to the law, he might deliver us from its penalties; and he was born of the house and lineage of David, to denote his sitting upon that everlasting throne, of which the throne of David was a type, and ruling for evermore the true Israel of God, his obedient people.

Q. Did not the prophecies of the Old Testament predict the miraculous birth of the Messiah?

A. The prophecies of the Old Testament foretold the miraculous birth of the Messiah. Jeremiah says, The Lord hath created a new thing upon the earth, a woman shall compass a man.[g] Isaiah says, Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.[h]

Q. What were the circumstances of our Saviour's birth?

A. Christ was born at Bethlehem, according to the prediction of the prophet Micah;[i] whither Joseph and Mary went, in obedience to the decree of Augustus, to be taxed.[j] The concourse of people at Bethlehem was so great, that they could find no accommodation but a stable;[k] where the blessed Virgin brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; doing herself the offices of a pious and tender parent, whilst all the angels of God worshipped her holy child.[l]

Q. How was the birth of our Saviour published to the world?

A. The birth of Christ was proclaimed by the administration of angels. As certain shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks by night, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them.[m] The splendour of the appearance confounded the humble shepherds; but the angel quickly dissipated the terror that seized them, with the tidings he brought of great joy to all people, addressing them in the joyful words, Unto you is

g Jer. xxxi. 22. h Isa. vii. 14. i Mic. v. 2.
j Luke ii. 4. k Luke ii. 7. l Heb. i. 6.
m Luke ii. 9.

born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Q. How were the shepherds directed to find this new-born King?

A. Lest the shepherds should expect a prince, accompanied with outward pomp and magnificence, the angel describes the meanness and obscurity of his situation: This shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.[o] The shepherds, without delay, went to Bethlehem, and finding the assurances of the angel verified, they published to the world both what they had seen and heard concerning the holy child Jesus.

Q. How was this joyful news of the birth of a Saviour received by the angels and the shepherds?

A. The multitude of the heavenly host celebrated the birth of Christ in that devout hymn, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men;*[p] and the shepherds, when they had found the real completion of what was told them by the angel, returned, glorifying and praising God.[q]

Q. This hymn of the angels having been retained in the offices of the Church ever since the primitive times of Christianity, it will be proper to explain it.

A. In this hymn, the blessed angels excited one another to give glory and praise to God for his wonderful works towards the children of men. They celebrated the majesty and greatness of God, those exalted prerogatives of power, wisdom, and goodness, which appeared with the greatest lustre in the stupendous incarnation of the Son of God; and by proclaiming peace on earth, and good will towards men, they signified that Christ should take away the enmity between heaven and earth, and reconcile man to God.

Q. What may we learn from the circumstances attending our Saviour's birth?

A. The eternal Son of God, when he descended upon earth, chose a state of poverty, to teach us, that riches and honours are not valued in the sight of God, nor necessary to true felicity. His birth was, in the first instance, announced, not to the haughty Herod, or to the proud Pharisees and Scribes, who would have contemned the humility of his appearance, but to the simple and innocent shepherds of Beth

n Luke ii. 10, 11. o Luke ii. 12. p Luke ii. 14. q Luke ii. 20

lehem. The important lesson is hereby taught us, that none but the poor in spirit, none but those who cherish meekness and humility of temper, are prepared to receive the blessings of salvation.

Q. At the time of our Saviour's birth, was there not a general expectation throughout the world, of the appearance of some great deliverer?

A. At the time of our Saviour's birth, the expectation of the coming of the Messiah was universal among the Jews; and a general expectation of the appearance of some great and powerful personage was cherished among the Gentiles. Suetonius, the famous historian, says,[r] There was an ancient and general opinion, famous throughout all the eastern parts, that the fates had determined that there should come out of Judea those that should govern the world. These words seem to be a verbal translation of that prophecy in Micah,[s] that out of Judah should come the Ruler. Tacitus, another historian, asserts,[t] that a great many were possessed with a persuasion, that it was contained in the ancient books of the priests, that, at that very time, the East should prevail, and that they who should govern the world were to come out of Judea. The phrase, that *the East should prevail*, refers to that title given the Messias by the prophet Zechariah,[u] who calls him the man whose name is the *East*. For though we translate the Hebrew word, *Branch*, yet it signifies also, the *East*; and may be rendered the one as well as the other.

Q. How was Christ qualified to make known the will of God to mankind?

A. A principal office of our Saviour was to make known the will of God to mankind. He was eminently qualified for this office, by the dignity and excellency of his person; by the clearness and perfection of his doctrine and precepts; by the brightness of his example; and by the encouragements of gracious assistances and glorious rewards, which he promises to all those who engage and persevere in his service.

Q. How was our Saviour qualified by the dignity of his person to reveal to us the will of God?

A. He who lay in the bosom of the Father, and had the Spirit communicated to him without measure,[v] in whom dwelt the fulness of the godhead bodily,[w] must have pos-

[r] Lib. viii. c. 4. [s] Mic. v. 2. [t] Lib. v. Hist.
[u] Zech. iii. 8 [v] John i. 18; iii. 34. [w] Col. ii. 9.

sessed the most perfect knowledge of the divine will. We have, therefore, the greatest reason to put our trust and confidence in that method of attaining salvation which he has revealed; for it was the contrivance of infinite wisdom, it is the gift of infinite mercy, it is assured to the penitent and faithful, by infinite truth and power.

Q. Wherein consists the perfection of our Saviour's doctrine and precepts?

A. The doctrine of Christ sheds the most clear and glorious lustre on every subject connected with the spiritual welfare and happiness of man. His Gospel conveys to us just and exalted views of the nature of God, of the perfection of his attributes, of the spirituality of his worship, of the means of access to the throne of his mercy, of the eternal destiny of man: on all these momentous and important subjects, reason conveyed only faint and uncertain knowledge. The precepts of Christ shed new and striking light on all the important duties which we owe to God, our neighbour, and ourselves: they are calculated, by their purity and perfection, to raise our nature to the highest improvement of which it is capable. To prevent our falling into sinful actions, our Saviour lays a restraint upon our thoughts, which influence our conduct, and commands us to govern our senses, which give birth to our thoughts:[x] to obviate all those evils which proceed from an inordinate desire of riches, he insists on that admirable temper of mind distinguished in his Gospel by *poverty of spirit*,[y] which teaches us to be humble and contented in every condition: to keep us at a distance from the temptations of lying and detraction, he has forbidden all idle words,[z] that the care to avoid them may secure us from falling into those greater faults: to hinder the fatal effects of anger and revenge, he has commanded us to love our enemies,[a] and to do good to them who do evil to us: to facilitate the practice of the virtue of patience, so necessary in this vale of tears, he has manifested to us the treasures that are hid in adversity, and the advantage of being persecuted for his sake: assuring us, that what the world calls misfortune and calamity, often proves the instruments of our happiness, both in this life and the next—blessed are they that mourn, blessed are they that are persecuted:[b] and to make us quiet and easy in our own minds, and mild and gentle in our conduct to others, he requires us

x Matt. v. 28. y Matt. v. 3. z Matt. xii. 36.
a Matt. v. 44. b Matt. v. 4, 10.

to have a quick sense of our own weaknesses and defects, and readily to condescend to the lowest offices, for the good of our neighbours.[c]

Q. Wherein appears the excellence of our Saviour's example?

A. Our Saviour has set us, in his life, a bright and perfect example of all the virtues which he requires us to cultivate. To impress on us the duties of piety and devotion, he frequently retired, and spent whole nights in prayer;[d] from worldly occurrences he always sought to raise matter for spiritual thoughts; and he conformed not only to divine institutions, but to human appointments, that tended to promote religion.[e] To teach us humility, the King of glory condescended to the poverty of a stable: this Wisdom of the Father became dumb, and was reduced to the simplicity of an infant. To teach us the duty of universal benevolence, the whole course of his life was employed in doing good.[f] To engage us to suppress all ambitious desires, he refused the offer of the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;[g] and when the people would have made him a king, he silently withdrew, and they knew not where to find him.[h] To impress on us the duty of obedience to government, he sheerfully paid tribute, though he was free from any such obligation, and was forced to work a miracle to perform it.[i] To excite us to live above the world, he chose to have no part nor share in the possessions of it, the Son of man not having where to lay his head;[j] and though he denied himself in the lawful pleasures and satisfactions of life, yet he was perfectly contented in his mean condition. To teach us in all our sufferings to be resigned to the will of God, in his bitter agony and death he renounced the strong inclination of nature to life, he overcame the aversion of nature to suffering, and cheerfully submitted to the appointment of his Father.[k] To teach us that we should not value the judgment of the world so highly as to permit a regard to it to lead us to trangress the laws of God, he made himself of no reputation;[l] and, in order to do good to mankind, was contented to be esteemed one of the worst of men, to be in league with Beelzebub,[m] an impostor, a friend and companion of publicans and sinners, and a seducer of the people.[n] To teach us

c Matt. xi. 29. *d* Matt. xiv. 23; Luke vi. 12 *e* John x. 29.
f Acts. x. 38. *g* Matt. iv. 8, &c. *h* John vi. 15.
i Matt. xvii. 24, 25, &c. *j* Matt. viii. 20. *k* Mat^t. xxvi. 39.
l Phil. 2 7. *m* Luke xi. 15. *n* Matt. xi. 19.

to resist all temptations to anger, and to preserve an evenness of mind under all provocations, he bore, on all occasions, with the dulness and slowness of the understanding of his disciples,[o] and answered the sharpest reproaches of his enemies with calm arguments and modest silence.[p] To impress on us that difficult duty of loving our enemies, he prayed most earnestly for his, even when, in an agonizing death, he felt the most bitter effects of their cruel malice.[q]

Q. What encouragement and aid does our Saviour offer us in the performance of our duty?

A. To animate us to repentance, and to excite us to holiness, he offers pardon and forgiveness of our sins, and perfect reconciliation to God by the merits of his death and passion. He supplies us with strength to perform our duty, by enlightening our dark minds, by exciting our wills to that which is good, and by raising our courage under difficulties and dangers: he alarms our fears, by the threatenings of eternal punishment; and encourages our hopes, by the promises of everlasting rewards. These are the most powerful considerations to induce men to renounce sin, and to lead them to the practice of every virtue.

Q. What are the affections which we should exercise on this joyful festival?

A. On this joyful festival we should contemplate, with holy admiration and gratitude, the stupendous love of God towards mankind, in sending no less a person than his own Son, and no less dear to him than his only begotten Son, to accomplish our salvation. Our hearts should be warmed with lively gratitude to the blessed Jesus, for his wonderful humility and compassion in undertaking the work of our redemption: for he who lodged in the bosom of his Father, came into the world, and had not where to lay his head; he who had heaven for his throne, was contented to be born in a stable, to be laid in a manger, to be wrapped in swaddling clothes. He became miserable, that we might be made happy; he became poor, that we might be made rich; he submitted to the death of the cross, that we might live for ever. The consideration of the infinite love of God in the redemption, should inspire us with the most lively confidence in his mercy, under a penitent sense of our sins; for he who hath given us his own Son, shall he not with him freely give us also all things?[r]

[o] John xiv. 5, &c. [p] John x. 32. [q] Luke xxiii. 34. [r] Rom. viii. 32.

Q How ought we to express our thankfulness for the incarnation of the Son of God?

A. We should express our thankfulness for the incarnation of the Son of God, by devout acts of praise and thanksgiving; by complying with the great design of this wonderful plan of redemption, which teaches us to deny all ungodliness and worldy lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;[s] and by imitating the infinite love of God, and as he so loved us, to love one another.[t]

Q. How should we express our gratitude to the blessed Jesus for his infinite love, in condescending to become our Redeemer?

A. We should express our gratitude to the blessed Jesus for his infinite love, in condescending to become our Redeemer, by sincerely believing in him; by cordially receiving him as our divine Prophet and instructor, our gracious High Priest and intercessor, our almighty King, obeying his commands, trusting in his intercession, and submitting to his laws; and by earnestly endeavouring to advance daily in piety and virtue, that we may be conformed to the likeness of that holy Redeemer whom we love. Our gratitude should also be expressed, by setting a great value upon all the means and opportunitiess of holding communion with him; by meditating upon his glorious character and offices; by earnestly imploring his mercy and grace; and by commemorating his infinite love in the holy Eucharist: and to complete the expressions of our gratitude, we should, by endeavouring to do good both to the bodies and souls of men, show that we are indeed the followers of that compassionate Jesus, who came into the world to save lost mankind. If, in this way, we express our gratitude to our blessed Lord, we may, with joyful confidence, look forward to his glorious appearing,[u] as our Judge and King, to exalt us to the eternal fruition of the joys of his presence.

Q. How is the observation of this festival abused?

A. This festival is abused, when, instead of devoting it to the exercises of piety, we chiefly employ it in vain and idle pleasures; when our joy degenerates into sin and sensuality; and when we indulge in luxury and intemperance, to the great scandal of our Saviour and his holy religion, and to our own great guilt and condemnation.

[s] Tit. ii. 12. [t] 1 John iv. 11. [u] Tit. ii. 13.

CHAPTER VI.

ST. STEPHEN,

THE FIRST MARTYR, DECEMBER 26.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT reason has been assigned for placing the festivals of St. Stephen, St. John, and the Holy Innocents immediately after Christmas?

A. For placing the festivals of St. Stephen, St. John, and the Holy Innocents immediately after Christmas, the following reason, among others, has been assigned: that St. Stephen was the first who suffered martyrdom; St. John was the disciple whom Jesus loved; and the slaughter of the Holy Innocents was the first considerable consequence of our Saviour's birth. Thus martyrdom, love, and innocence, are first magnified as things wherein Christ is most honoured.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the collect, epistle, and gospel for the day?

A. The collect teaches us to pray that we may imitate this holy martyr, in his lively faith of immortal glory, and in his forgiveness of his enemies; the epistle gives us an account of his martyrdom; and the gospel assures us, that his blood, and the blood of all those who suffer for the name of Christ, shall be required at the hands of those who shed it.

Q. What character do the Scriptures give us of St. Stephen?

A. St. Stephen, who was a Jew, and probably one of the seventy disciples, is described in Scripture as a man full of faith and the Holy Ghost.[v] This character implies, that he had great zeal and piety, and that he was endowed with extraordinary measures of that divine Spirit which had been shed upon the Church on the day of Pentecost; by which he was peculiarly qualified for the honourable and useful office of Deacon, to which he had been advanced.[w]

Q. What was the treatment which St. Stephen received from the Jews to whom he preached the Gospel?

A. St. Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people;[x] and by his ministrations

[v] Acts vi. 5.
[x] Acts vi. 8.
[w] The office of a Deacon has been explained, page 51.

the word of God increased[y] so much, that the malice of the unbelieving Jews was excited against Stephen. There were synagogues or colleges established at Jerusalem, not only for expounding the law and for prayer, but for the instruction of youth. These colleges, being sometimes built by Jews who were foreigners, were called after the names of the respective countries of those who built them. Certain members of these synagogues were excited to oppose and dispute with St. Stephen,[z] but not being able to resist the spirit and the wisdom with which he spake, they suborned false witnesses to depose against him, that they had heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God; that he had threatened the destruction of the temple, and the abolition of that religion which had been established by Moses, and by God himself.

Q. What was the substance of the defence which St. Stephen made against the accusation of the Jews?

A. In answer to the accusation of the Jews, that he was guilty of blasphemy, in setting the Gospel of Jesus of Nazareth above the Mosaic law, which was established by God, St. Stephen endeavoured to prove that the Mosaic rights and economy were not designed to be of essential and permanent obligation. He accordingly told them, that if they would look back to their forefather Abraham, they would find that God chose him to be a father of the faithful when he lived among idolatrous nations, and that he served God acceptably, without those external rites upon which they laid so great stress; that when God entered into covenant with him, no ceremony was appointed but that of circumcision; and that, by this rite, the succeeding patriarchs worshipped God for several ages. And when Moses was appointed by God to conduct their forefathers out of the house of bondage, he signified, that the law which he imposed upon them, should be superseded by another law, by foretelling, that God would raise up to them a prophet like unto him, and that they should hear him. By these and similar arguments, he endeavoured to prove to them that there could not be that necessity for those Mosaic rites which they pretended; that these rites were designed to last but for a time; and that it was that refractory humour which they inherited from their forefathers, who had persecuted and slain those prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah, which led them to resist

[y] Acts vi. 7. [z] Acts vi. 9

the Holy Ghost,[a] and to betray and murder that just One,[b] who came to fulfil that law for which they pretended so great regard.

Q. How did the judges bear his defence?

A. The judges expressed the greatest rage and fury, their consciences being stung with the truths which St. Stephen delivered. But, regardless of their resentment, he fixed his eyes and thoughts upon Heaven: and when, being full of the Holy Ghost, he declared that he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,[c] his adversaries asserted that he was a blasphemer, and resolved upon his death, without any further process.

Q. How did St. Stephen suffer martyrdom?

A. St. Stephen was stoned to death, which was one of the punishments inflicted by the Jews for great and enormous crimes. The witnesses, whose hands were to be first upon him, putting off, according to custom, their upper garments, laid them down at Saul's feet;[d] while the holy saint was upon his knees, recommending his soul to God, and praying for his murderers, that the guilt of his death might not be laid to their charge.[e] In this manner, copying the example of his blessed Master, whom he implored to receive his spirit this holy martyr fell asleep.

Q. What may we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. St. Stephen was calm and resigned under the greatest sufferings, looking steadfastly to the glory prepared for him. Hence we may learn, that a firm belief and persuasion of another life, is the great support of a good man under the sufferings of the present. St. Stephen, by the animating succours of the Holy Ghost, triumphantly suffered martyrdom. Hence we may learn, that when malice and opposition to the truth lead men to persecute the faithful servants of God, he will graciously assist his suffering people with extraordinary communications of his grace. St. Stephen meekly, yet resolutely proclaimed and defended the divine religion of his Master. Hence we should learn, that no opposition or calumny from bad men, should discourage us from doing all the good in our power: and that we should, on all proper occasions, defend, and seek to promote the honour of God with courage and resolution, and yet with that patience and moderation which best become the advo-

[a] Acts vii. 51. [b] Acts vii. 52. [c] Acts vii. 56.
[d] Acts vii. 58. [e] Acts vii. 60.

cates of truth. And, finally, the holy charity of this blessed martyr, in praying, after the example of his divine Master, for his persecutors and murderers, should teach us that we must love our enemies, bless them that curse us, pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us; thus fulfilling the perfection of Christian love, and proving ourselves, like St. Stephen, to be true disciples of the blessed Jesus.

Q. Explain wherein the love of our enemies, to which we are excited by the example of St. Stephen, as well as of our blessed Lord, consists.

A. The love of enemies, a duty peculiar to the Christian institution, consists in a sincere disposition to promote their welfare and happiness, and in being ready, upon proper occasions, to give real testimony of this disposition. We should accordingly honour them for their virtues, and pity them for their miseries; we should relieve their wants, conceal their defects, and vindicate their injured reputation; we should pray for them, and be always ready to take such steps as will most probably tend to remove their enmity.

Q. What obligations do we lie under to the performance of this duty?

A. The express commands[f] of our Saviour, the Author of our holy religion, require from us the forgiveness of our enemies. Christ has made forgiveness of injuries the condition, without which we can expect no pardon of our sins from him;[g] and has, in his own person, set the most exalted example of this virtue.

Q. Wherein consist the reasonableness and excellency of this duty?

A. This duty tends to the comfort and happiness of our lives—patience and forgiveness affording a lasting and solid pleasure: it prevents the agitation and uneasiness which always accompany the indulgence of violent passion, and prevents many troubles and inconveniences which arise from a malicious and revengeful temper. To do kindnesses, not only where there are neither the claims of merit and obligation, but even in opposition to affront and injury, is the perfection of goodness; to overcome resentment, is an argument of a great mind, the most valuable and exalted conquest that we can obtain;[h] and, finally, the practice of this duty assimilates us to God himself, who does good to the unthankful and the evil.

[f] Matt. v. 44. [g] Matt. vi. 14, 15. [h] Prov. xvi. 32.

CHAPTER VII.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, DECEMBER 27.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT have you to observe in regard to the Evangelist St. John?

A. St. John was a Galilean,[i] the son of Zebedee and Salome, younger brother to St. James, with whom he was brought up in the trade of fishing, and with whom he was called to be a disciple and an apostle of our Saviour. He is thought to be far the youngest of all the apostles, being thirty years old when he was first called to that dignity. As he died about an hundred years old, in the third year of Trajan, he must have lived above seventy years after our Saviour's sufferings, and consequently must have been very young when called to the apostleship.

Q. What have you to remark concerning the epistle and gospel for the day?

A. The epistle and gospel for this day, are both taken out of the writings of St. John. The epistle contains St. John's testimony of Christ, and the gospel declares Christ's testimony of St. John. The gospel seems applicable to the day itself; the epistle to the day, being attendant upon the preceding more solemn festival of Christmas.

Q. What new name did St. John receive from our Saviour?

A. He and his brother James were styled by Christ, *Boanerges*, that is, the *Sons of Thunder*.[j] This surname is thought more especially to be attributed to St. John, because he so clearly taught the divinity of Jesus Christ, and delivered the mysteries of the Gospel in a more sublime and profound strain than the other evangelists.

Q. What particular marks did St. John receive of our Saviour's regard?

A. He was one of the three disciples whom our Saviour admitted to the more private transactions of his life: he was the disciple whom, it is said, Jesus loved; who lay in his bosom at the paschal supper; and to whom, as his dearest

[i] Matt. iv. 21 [j] Mark iii. 17.

friend, our Lord, when he was leaving the world, committed the care of the blessed Mary his mother.

Q. What may we learn from the particular attachment which our Saviour discovered for this apostle?

A. From the particular attachment of Christ to the apostle St. John, we may learn, that the virtue of friendship is not incompatible with the most sincere and ardent love to mankind; since the blessed Jesus himself, whose soul was inflamed by divine benevolence and charity, distinguished particular persons by peculiar marks of affection.

Q. In what manner did St. John express his sensibility to the particular affection which Christ manifested for him?

A. Animated by lively affection for his blessed Master, this disciple quickly resented the affront which the Samaritans cast on the Saviour. That he might have a nearer enjoyment of his blessed Lord, he expressed a desire to sit on his right hand, in his kingdom of glory. Although, when Christ was apprehended, he fled with the rest of the disciples, his affections soon overcame the suggestions of base and selfish fear. He boldly entered the high priest's hall, where his Master was arraigned; he resolutely followed the Saviour through the several degrading stages of his unjust trial and condemnation; even in the dark and dismaying hour of the crucifixion, affection hurried him to the cross, to witness and to cheer the last moments of his suffering Master; and receiving, as the dying and affectionate legacy of his Lord, the blessed Mary the mother of Jesus, he took her to his own home, and ever treated her with dutiful and honourable regard.

Q. Where did St. John exercise his apostolic office?

A. St. John exercised his apostolic office in the East, principally in Asia,[k] where he founded the churches of Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea. His chief place of residence was Ephesus; of which church, after the death of Timothy the bishop, he took charge towards the close of his life.

Q. What treatment did St. John receive from the emperor Domitian?

A. At the command of the emperor Domitian, to whom he had been represented as an impious subverter of the religion of the empire, St. John was sent, by the procunsul of Asia, bound to Rome; where he was cast into a caldron of

[k] Euseb. lib. iii. c. 1.

oil set on fire,[l] from the consuming fury of which he was rescued by the power of that same God who preserved the three Hebrew captives in the flames of a burning furnace. He was then banished, by the order of Domitian, into the island of Patmos, in the Archipelago; where he remained several years, instructing the inhabitants in the Christian faith, until recalled from banishment by the emperor Nerva. He then settled at Ephesus, where, about the commencement of the reign of Trajan, he died, being an hundred years old.

Q. How does it appear that St. John wrote the gospel that goes under his name?

A. The gospel itself describes the author of it under such characters as belong peculiarly to St. John; as, that he was a disciple of our Lord, and that disciple whom Jesus loved, and of whom the fame went abroad among the brethren, that he should not die.[m] The primitive fathers, Irenæus of Lyons, Clemens of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, &c. ascribe this gospel to St. John, and speak of it as being universally received in the Church as an inspired book.

Q. At what time, and upon what occasion, did St. John write his gospel?

A. St. John wrote his gospel after his return to Ephesus, with a view to correct the early heresies of those times, particularly those of Ebion, Cerinthus, &c. who began to deny that Christ had any existence before his incarnation; and also with a view to supply those passages of the evangelical history which the other sacred writers had omitted. He accordingly insists principally upon that part of the life of Christ between the commencing of his ministry and the death of John the Baptist; and as he is very copious upon the sublime and mysterious subject of the incarnation, he was much extolled by the primitive fathers as an elevated and spiritual writer, and was honoured with the eminent and distinguishing title of *the Divine.*

Q. To whom did St. John address his epistles, and what are the subjects of them?

A. The first epistle of St. John is styled *catholic*, calculated for all times and places as well as persons; the other two are addressed to particular persons. They contain most excellent rules for the regulation of the Christian life, and particularly insist upon the important and sublime virtue of

l Tertul. de Præf. Hær. c. 36. m John xxi. 20, 21, 22, &c.

Christian love, which indeed constitutes the favourite and animating topic of St. John's writings.

Q. When did he write his Revelation?

A. He wrote his Revelation while confined in the island of Patmos.

Q. What may we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. St. John returned the affection of his Lord and Master, by steady adherence to him under his dangers and adversities. Hence we may learn, that sincere love for the Saviour should lead us to bear his cross, as well as to partake of his glories; to accompany him in the sufferings and agonies of the cross on Calvary, as well as to rejoice in the manifestation of his celestial glory on mount Tabor. Sincerity, constancy, and ardour in friendship, are also sanctioned and enforced by the example of our Saviour and his beloved apostle; and if we would enjoy the exalted affection of the blessed Redeemer, we must cherish, through divine grace, those dispositions of meekness, gentleness, and love, which in a high degree animated this apostle, and rendered him worthy of the affection of his blessed Master. In the writings of St. John we behold enforced the divinity of the Saviour, and the exalted importance and obligation of Christian charity.

Q. Wherein consists Christian charity, or the love of our neighbour?

A. The love of our neighbour consists in rendering him all kind and tender offices. If he be virtuous, it will make us esteem him; if he be honest, but weak in judgment, it will excite our sympathy and attention to him; if he be wicked, it will excite us to endeavour to reclaim him. The love of our neighbour will lead us to rejoice with him in prosperity, to succour him in adversity, to conceal his defects when no good purpose can be answered by divulging them, and zealously to vindicate his reputation when unjustly attacked. This virtue will lead us to be affable, candid, courteous, and respectful in the intercourse of life; slow to anger, long suffering, and merciful.

Q. In what sense may this commandment, to love our neighbour, be styled a new commandment?

A. This commandment is, by our Lord and his apostles, so much enlarged as to the object of it, being extended to all mankind; so greatly advanced as to the degree of it, even *to laying* down our lives for one another; so effectually

aught and encouraged, so strongly urged and enforced, that t may very well be styled a new commandment. Neither in he Jewish law, nor in Heathen ethics, is this duty raised to he elevated rank which it holds in the Christian system.

Q. What are the obligations of this duty?

A. Without the exercise of mutual kindness and love, there can be no pleasure or advantage in the intercourse of society. The best expression of our love to God, is the love of man, who is the creature of God, who bears his image, and who is the object of his continual favour and regard. This duty is enjoined on us, by the particular command and animating example of Christ; by whom it is made the distinguishing badge of the Christian profession, and who instituted the holy communion, to be a bond of love and unity among his followers. The primitive Christians were so eminent for this virtue, that it became the current remark of the Heathen—Behold how these Christians love one another!

Q. What are the characteristics of Christian charity?

A. Christian charity should be universal, extending to all mankind; it should be sincere, solid, and substantial, leading us to unwearied exertions to advance the temporal and spiritual happiness of our fellow-men.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOLY INNOCENTS, DECEMBER 28.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *festival does the church celebrate this day?*

A. The Church this day celebrates the martyrdom of the Holy Innocents, who suffered for Christ, and glorified God by their deaths; it having been the sense of the Church that they died the death of martyrs, though incapable of making the choice; God having supplied the defects of the will, by his own acceptance of the suffering.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the epistle and gospel for the day?

A. The gospel contains the history of the martyrdom of the Innocents: the epistle describes the glorious state of those and the like innocents in heaven.

Q. What was the occasion of the death of these infants?

A. Herod, alarmed with the inquiry of the wise men from the East,[n] and apprehending his own kingdom might be in danger from him who was born king of the Jews, endeavours at first, under a pretence of worshipping the Saviour, to get him into his power.[o] But the wise men being warned of God in a dream, after they had been at Bethlehem, did not return to Herod, but went to their own country another way.[p] Enraged at this disappointment, Herod sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem,[q] under the hope of involving the young child Jesus in this destruction. This massacre of the infants is mentioned by a Heathen historian.[r]

Q. How did our blessed Saviour escape this bloody design of Herod?

A. Joseph, at the command of God, by the ministration of an angel, took the young child and his mother by night, and fled into Egypt;[s] where they remained till they were by the angel informed of the death of Herod, and commanded to return into the land of Israel.[t]

Q. Where did our Saviour dwell on his return from Egypt?

A. Our Saviour, on his return from Egypt, dwelt at Nazareth;[u] thus fulfilling the prophecy, that he should be called a *Nazarene;* which name was applied to him as a name of infamy, by the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, Nazareth being reputed a contemptible city, out of which no good thing could come.[v]

Q. What punishment did Herod suffer for his cruelty?

A. The signal vengeance of God was inflicted upon Herod, who for his cruelty was smitten with many plagues and tortures.[w]

Q. Ought not God in his almighty providence to have prevented the destruction of these innocent children?

A. It does not become frail and finite man to arraign the proceedings of the infinitely wise and good Sovereign of the universe. The death of these children was made by God

n Matt. ii.
o Matt. ii. 8.
p Matt. ii. 12.
q Matt. ii. 16.
r Macrobius, lib. ii. c. 4.
s Matt. ii. 13, 14.
t Matt. ii. 19.
u Matt. ii. 23.
v John i. 46
w Josephus, lib. xvii. c. 8.

the instrument of their glory, they being thus delivered from the miseries of life, and crowned with the high rewards of martyrdom.

Q. What may we learn from this festival?

A. Herod, under the pretence of worshipping Jesus sought his destruction: hence we may learn, that religion is sometimes used as a cloak for ambitious and worldly designs. Since innocent children were made a sacrifice to the ambition of a cruel tyrant, we may learn, that suffering and affliction are not always proofs of guilt, but, on the contrary, are sometimes the marks of God's favour. The recollection that the same almighty providence which rescued Jesus from the cruel purposes of Herod, is ready to succour and defend us in difficulty and danger, should inspire us with confidence and hope. On this holy festival, our minds should be led to the contemplation of the temper and disposition of innocent children, of whom, says our Saviour, is the kingdom of God.[r]

Q. Wherein consists that temper of mind which our Saviour commends, when he enjoins us to become like unto little children?

A. This temper of mind consists in humility and lowliness; in a total submission to the will of God; in an entire dependence upon him; and in a holy contempt of the riches, honours, and pleasures of this world.

Q. Wherein consists this humility and lowliness of mind?

A. This humility and lowliness of mind consists in the true knowledge and sense of our weak and sinful condition, and in a profound sense of our obligations to God for those divine succours by which alone we are enabled to serve him. It will lead us to bear with patience contumely and insult; it will prevent us from being too much elated or influenced by the praises of men, knowing that the approbation of God alone can give us solid comfort, and that a sense of duty to him should be the governing principle of our conduct.

Q. Wherein consists the submission of a Christian?

A. The virtue of submission consists in a firm persuasion of mind, that nothing happens to us but by the will and permission of God; that he loves us better than we do ourselves, and knows the best methods of making us happy; and that, therefore, we should reverently and cheerfully

r Luke xviii. 16

acquiesce in all his dispensations, however they may thwart those schemes of happiness which we may have formed.

Q. Wherein consists the duty of dependence upon God?

A. Dependence upon God will lead us to cherish the firm belief, that the power and goodness of God will rescue us from the dangers and difficulties which assail us; or will support us under them, or overrule them to our advantage.

Q. Wherein consists the contempt of the world?

A. A contempt of the world will lead us to regard all worldly enjoyments as unworthy of our attention, when compared with the enduring and satisfying happiness of heaven. This virtue will lead us to be content with that portion of the good things of this life which providence may assign us, without purchasing the enjoyment of worldly goods by the commission of any sin; without being anxiously concerned for the increase of them, or extremely depressed when we are deprived of them. Mindful that our portion is not in the pleasures of this world, but in the happiness of the next, we shall enjoy in moderation those innocent gratifications which the bounty of providence may have put in our power. Ever remembering that our blessed Master passed a life of self-denial, suffering, and sorrow, the view of him will arm us with patience and constancy under the deprivation of worldly comfort and the heavy pressure of affliction; and steadily fixing our hearts on the glories of that heavenly kingdom which he hath prepared for us, we shall triumphantly soar above the vain and perishing enjoyments of the world.

Q. What are the benefits of this humble, submissive, and dependent temper, this contempt for worldy pleasures?

A. By cherishing these dispositions, we shall experience most real enjoyment in the present life; we shall rejoice in the light of the reconciled countenance of our God, who ever regardeth with favour the humble and meek; and we shall be prepared for entering on the blissful fruition of the glories of his presence.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY.

Q. WHAT *have you to observe in regard to this day?*

A. It was a custom among the primitive Christians to observe the octave, or eighth day after their principal feasts, with great solemnity; and upon every day between the feast and the octave, as upon the octave itself, they used to repeat some part of the service that was performed on the feast day. In imitation of this custom, this day generally falling within the octave of Christmas, the collect then used is repeated now. The lessons, the epistle, and gospel, still set forth the mysteries of our redemption by the birth of Christ.

CHAPTER X.

The CIRCUMCISION *of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, or* NEW YEAR'S DAY, *January* 1.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *festival doth the Church celebrate this day?*

A. The Church this day celebrates the festival of the circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when eight days were accomplished, subjected himself to this rite, and first shed his sacred blood for us.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the lessons and the epistle and gospel for this day?

A. The first lesson for the morning, gives an account of the institution of circumcision. The first lesson for the evening, both the second lessons, and the epistle, tend to show, that though the circumcision of the flesh is abrogated, God still requires that circumcision of the heart, which the external rite denoted and enforced. The gospel records the circumcision of our blessed Saviour, and the divine and sacred name which was then imposed upon him.

Q. Explain the rite of circumcision.

A. Circumcision was a rite of the Jewish law, whereby that people were received into covenant with God. It was,

under a severe penalty,[y] to be administered on the eighth day after the birth of the child. It was first enjoined on Abraham, as a token of the covenant God made with him and his posterity;[z] and it was renewed by Joshua, when the Israelites entered the land of Canaan; having been disused by them for forty years, during their sojourning in the wilderness.

Q. What was the original design of this rite?

A. The original design of this rite was, that every son of Abraham might bear in his body the seal of the inheritance of the land of promise, and the sign of their being in covenant with God. The visible sign was designed to remind them of their allegiance to the only true God, and to excite them to strive after the invisible grace which it sealed, his favour, and an eternal inheritance in the kingdom of heaven.

Q. What rite in the Christian Church answers to that of circumcision under the law?

A. When all distinction between the children of Abraham and other nations was abolished, and Gentiles as well as Jews rendered capable of entering into covenant with God, the rite of circumcision was abolished, and the sacrament of baptism substituted. By this rite, children are entered into covenant with God under the Gospel, as they were, under the Law, by circumcision; and become, by baptism, obliged to observe the commands of the Gospel, as the circumcised infant became a debtor to the whole Law of Moses.[a] That infants are proper subjects of baptism, as they were of circumcision, there can be no doubt. If infants, under the Jewish dispensation, were admitted into covenant with God by circumcision, how can it be improper that, under the Gospel, they should be admitted into covenant with him by baptism? The language of Christ is, "suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Since they sustain the lamentable consequences of the fall, it is certainly proper that they should enjoy the means of redemption which God has provided in his holy Church, into which baptism is the only mode of admission; for the Saviour himself declares, that except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.[b] In the primitive Church, baptism was administered to infants; and the custom was considered as of apostolic institution.

Q. Why was Jesus Christ circumcised, since he was holy and without sin?

y Gen. xvii. 14. z Gen. xvii. 10. a Gal. v. 3. b John iii. 5.

A. It was necessary that the Son of God should be circumcised, in order that he might become subject unto the Law, and, sustaining the penalties of the Law in our stead, might expiate our sins by his own blood.

Q. What is the import of that sacred name which was imposed upon the Son of God when he was circumcised?

A. The name of *Jesus*, which was given to our Saviour at his circumcision, implies his office—to save his people from their sins;[c] that by his death he should deliver them from the punishment due to sin, and by his grace should deliver them from its power and dominion.

Q. What may we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. This festival should impress on us the necessity of that spiritual circumcision, or change of heart and life, which our Saviour has made the condition of salvation. The example of Christ, who, in obedience to the will of God, submitted to an humiliating and painful rite, should teach us humility, and the duty of submission to all the ordinances of the Church. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord."

Q. What does this spiritual circumcision signify?

A. This spiritual circumcision implies the weaning of our affections from the world, and placing them upon heaven; a strict government of our sensual appetites; a total abstinence from forbidden pleasures, and moderation in the pursuit of those which are lawful. In fine, it denotes a conformity of our hearts and lives to the holy image and commands of God; and until we are thus renewed by the spirit and power of Christ, we are none of his.

Q. What should the commencement of a new year suggest unto us?

A. The commencement of a new year should suggest to us the great value of time, which God has given us for the purpose of working out our salvation; and upon the improvement of which, therefore, depends our eternal destiny. Of time, little is at our own disposal; what is past, cannot be recalled; the future is uncertain; the present is all that we can call our own, and this is continually fleeting. In this short and uncertain period we have a concern of infinite importance to secure, even our eternal salvation; and this requires the whole force and vigour of our minds, the labour

[c] Matt. i. 21.

and industry of all our days. This important concern, therefore, should not be left to a sick bed, or the evening of our lives, when our strength and our reason are departing from us: *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation. If we obstinately resist and contemn the offers of divine grace, the things that belong to our eternal peace may be for ever hidden from our eyes.

Q. In what manner ought we to employ and regulate our time?

A. We ought to redeem the time which we have misspent, by sincerely lamenting our past follies and transgressions; by adoring the infinite patience and goodness of God, who spared us when we deserved punishment; and by seeking to make our peace with him, by lively penitence, and holy and obedient faith in his Son Jesus. The necessary business of this life should be conducted from a sacred regard to the laws of God, and to the account we must render at his tribunal: the salvation of our own souls, the good of our fellow-men, the glory of God, should be the momentous ends at which we should earnestly aim in all our actions: diligence, zeal, and order, should characterize the management of both our temporal and spiritual concerns: and should it please God to prosper the work of our hands, we should evidence our gratitude to him, and lay up an unfailing treasure in heaven, by devoting a portion of our wealth to the establishment or aid of pious and benevolent institutions. Thus faithfully devoting our time, our talents and advantages, to the honour and service of God, we may humbly rejoice in his favour here, and confidently look forward to the fruition of his blessed presence hereafter.

CHAPTER XI.

THE EPIPHANY, JANUARY 6.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *festival does the Church celebrate this day?*

A. The Church this day celebrates the festival of the Epiphany. This word signifying *manifestation*, may be applied to Christmas-day, when Christ was manifested in the flesh; but it is appropriated by the Church to this day, when he was manifested to the Gentiles.

Q. What is the design of the Church in celebrating this festival?

A. In celebrating this festival, we design to show our gratitude to God, for manifesting the Gospel to the Gentile world; thus vouchsafing to them equal privileges with the Jews: and the first instance of this divine favour to the Gentile world was, when the birth of Christ was declared to the wise men of the East.

Q. What is the design of the lessons and the epistle and gospel for the day?

A. The first lessons contain prophecies of the increase of the Church, by the abundant accession of the Gentiles; the second lesson for the morning, and the epistle, contain a vindication of this gracious dispensation of God to the Gentile world; the gospel gives an account of the manifestation of the Saviour to the wise men of the East; and the second lesson for the evening service, contains an account of the manifestation of the divine power of Christ, by the first miracle which he wrought at Cana of Galilee.

Q. Who were the wise men to whom our Saviour was manifested?

A. Our Saviour was manifested to the wise men of the East, called, in Greek, *magi;* who were celebrated for their learning, particularly their knowledge and skill in astronomy; to which study the priests and great men of the East devoted themselves.

Q. In what manner did God manifest the birth of the Saviour to the wise men?

A. The birth of Christ was manifested to the wise men by the appearance of a luminous meteor, which was ob-

served by them to differ from the ordinary stars of heaven, and was considered, agreeably to the notions then prevalent among the Gentiles, to presage something of great moment and importance. The expectation of the appearance of some great personage, founded originally on the prophecies which were delivered to the Jews concerning the coming of the Messiah, was then universal. The appearance of an extraordinary meteor in the heaven would, therefore, be considered as announcing his birth, and would direct these wise men on their journey to Judea, where this glorious personage was to appear. The appearance of the star, and the journey of the Chaldean wise men in consequence of it, are mentioned by Chalcidius the Platonist.[d]

Q. How did the wise men find the young child Jesus?

A. Upon applying to Herod at Jerusalem, they were directed by him to Bethlehem, the place pointed out by the prophets as the birth-place of the Messiah. Pursuing their journey to Bethlehem, the luminous meteor, in appearance like a star, again appeared to them, and conducted them to the place where Jesus was.[e]

Q. Did not the wise men render homage to the Saviour?

A. When they found the Saviour, they fell down and worshipped him: and as it was customary to approach kings and great men with presents, they opened their treasures, and laid before the Saviour, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the choicest products of their country.

Q. Why did God thus manifest his Son to the wise men of the East?

A. It was the merciful design of God, that his grace should appear unto all men: and as the Jews had notice of our Saviour's birth, by the appearacce of angels to the shepherds; so the Gentiles were informed of it now, by the manifestation of Christ to the wise men of the East. The time was now come, when the wall of partition should be broken down, and all nations be one fold, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Q. Did not these wise men evidence the most exalted courage and pious zeal?

A. These wise men were not intimidated by the difficulties and uncertainty of th: journey, nor by the fear of Herod, who, they had every reason to expect, would be enraged at the mention of a rival king; and though they found the

[d] Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 25 [e] Matt. ii. 9

Saviour surrounded by poverty and meanness, they yet offered him profound adoration, as a spiritual Saviour and King.

Q. What useful instruction does this festival afford?

A. The wise men of the East, though distinguished for their learning and high stations, readily followed what they believed to be the direction of God, pointing out to them, by the miraculous appearance of a star, the humble Saviour who was born to the world. Hence we should learn the duty of employing all the advantages of birth and station to the noble purposes of religion and piety; we should learn, at all times readily to obey the commandments of God, whatever difficulties may oppose us, whatever censure or ridicule may assail us, whatever sacrifice we may be required to make. Like the wise men who humbly worshipped the new-born Saviour, we should also worship him whom, by faith, we may discern full of grace and truth; and, offering him the homage of our hearts, place ourselves under his guidance and direction, as our divine Instructor, Redeemer, and King.

Q. What virtues may the offerings which the wise men made to the Saviour be considered as denoting?

A. Gold, which is the common standard of those good things we enjoy, and wherewith we may relieve the wants of the poor, is a fit emblem for charity and works of mercy, "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God."[f] David's desiring that his prayer "might be set before God as incense,"[g] and the prayers of the saints ascending up before God "as the smoke of the incense,"[h] show us how fitly our addresses to heaven are represented by frankincense; and the chief use of myrrh being to preserve dead bodies from putrefaction, this may be considerd as an emblem of that holy mortification and self-denial whereby we "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."[i] The offerings with which the Christian, therefore, should glorify his Saviour, are works of charity or mercy, prayer and mortification.

Q. How may we make our riches subservient to the purposes of charity and mercy, and thus render them an acceptable offering to our blessed Saviour?

A. We make our riches an acceptable offering to Christ, when we apply them to providing for the comfort and hap-

[f] Philip. iv. 18. [g] Psal. cxli. 2. [h] Rev. viii. 4. [i] Rom. xii. 1.

piness of our families; to the benefit of pious and benevolent institutions; to the relief of the poor and necessitous; and, in fine, when we faithfully use them as gifts intrusted to us by God, to whom we are to render an account of our stewardship.

Q. When will our prayers be acceptable to God?

A. Our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must be offered with such constancy and fervour as will show that we are earnestly desirous of the blessings that we seek, and yet with such modesty and humility as will loudly proclaim our sense of our own unworthiness, and of the infinite condescension of God, in permitting us to approach his throne. Above all, our prayers must be offered with faith, with a firm reliance that, when we perform the conditions on which God has suspended the gift of his favours, he will bestow them upon us, in such a manner, and in such a proportion, as he sees most for our good.

Q. When will our self-denial and mortification be an acceptable offering to God?

A. The duty of self-denial will be acceptable to God, when it leads us not only to abstain from all outward acts of sin, but to resist and endeavour, through divine grace, to overcome our sinful passions and inclinations; and accordingly, sedulously to avoid all those indulgences which expose us to temptation, and strengthen the dominion of sin in our hearts.

Q. With what dispositions should we commemorate the manifestation of our Saviour to the Gentiles?

A. The manifestation of the Saviour to the Gentile world, by which gracious dispensation of God we have been "called out of darkness into his marvellous light," should be commemorated with lively gratitude, with firm resolutions to walk worthy of our holy vocation, and with earnest prayer to God, that he would be pleased to extend the light of salvation to those who still sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the SUNDAYS *after the* EPIPHANY.

Q. WHAT is the design of the Church in her proper services for the Sundays after the Epiphany?

A. As the design of the Church, in all her proper services from Christmas to Epiphany, appears to be to set forth the humanity of the Saviour, and to manifest him in the flesh; so, during the Sundays after the Epiphany, her design appears to be to display his divinity, by recounting to us in the gospels, some of his first miracles and manifestations of his divine power. The design of the epistles is to excite us to imitate Christ as far as we can, and to manifest ourselves to be his disciples, by a constant practice of all Christian virtues.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of SEPTUAGESIMA, SEXAGESIMA, *and* QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAYS.

Q. WHY were these Sundays so called?

A. The first Sunday in Lent being called *Quadragesima*, being the fortieth day before Easter, the three preceding Sundays were denominated, from the next round numbers, *Quinquagesima*, fiftieth; *Sexagesima*, sixtieth; and *Septuagesima*, seventieth day before Easter.

Q. What appears to be the design of the Church in these Sundays?

A. The design of the Church in these Sundays, is to call us from the feasting and joy of Christmas, to prepare for the fasting and humiliation proper for the approaching season of Lent; to bring us from thinking on the manner of Christ's coming into the world, to reflecting on the cause of it—our own sins and miseries; that so, being convinced of the reasonableness of punishing and mortifying ourselves for our sins, we may the *more* strictly and religiously apply our-

selves to the duties of humiliation, mortification, and repentance, during the season of Lent.

Q. What have you to remark in regard to the epistles and gospels for these Sundays?

A. The epistles for each of these three days are taken out of St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. The two first persuade us to acts of mortification and penance, by proposing to us St. Paul's example; and because all acts of self-denial, unless founded upon charity, or a principle of love to God, and submission to his institutions, profit nothing, the Church, in the epistle for Quinquagesima Sunday, sets before us this exalted virtue of Christian love and unity. The design of the gospels is the same with that of the epistles.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL, JANUARY 25.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT festival doth the Church this day celebrate?

A. The Church this day celebrates the conversion of St. Paul, who was a chosen vessel to bear God's name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.[j] He was not of the number of the twelve; yet, for his extraordinary eminence in the ministry of the Gospel, he was styled an apostle.

Q. Why is St. Paul commemorated by his conversion?

A. St. Paul is not commemorated, as the other apostles are, by his death or martyrdom, but by his conversion; because, as it was wonderful in itself, so it was highly beneficial to the Church of Christ. By his indefatigable labours he contributed very much to the propagation of the Gospel throughout the world; and while other apostles had their particular provinces, he had the care of all the churches.

Q. What have you to remark concerning the epistle and the gospel for the day?

j Acts ix. 15.

A. The epistle relates to the conversion of St. Paul; and the gospel exhibits the eminent reward of those who, like this apostle, shall steadily adhere to the Saviour, and labour in his service.

Q. Give an account of the birth-place, parentage, and education of St. Paul.

A. St. Paul was born at Tarsus, the metropolis of Cilicia, a city famous for riches and learning, whose inhabitants enjoyed the franchises and liberties of Roman citizens.[k] His parents were both Jews, and of the tribe of Benjamin; so that he was an Hebrew of the Hebrews. He first engaged in the occupation of tent-making, the Jews esteeming it a disgrace not to bring up their children to some useful trade, both as a security from idleness, and a resource against poverty and misfortune. He was educated also in the learning of his city; and afterwards removed to Jerusalem, where he became a scholar to the great rabbi Gamaliel. We find him described by two names, *Saul* and *Paul;* the one Hebrew, relating to his Jewish original; the other Latin, assumed by him, as some think, at his conversion, as an act of humility, styling himself less than the least of all saints.

Q. Was not St. Paul a violent persecutor of the Church before his conversion?

A. Inflamed by the fiery spirit of the sect of the Pharisees in which he was educated, and transported by the zeal of his own temper, he violently opposed all those who were esteemed enemies to the Mosaic economy. He accordingly persecuted the Christians with great fury, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples at Jerusalem, making havock of the Church, and procuring a commission to imprison the Christians at Damascus.[l] It appears also, that he was accessary to the death of the holy martyr St. Stephen.[m]

Q. What were the circumstances of St. Paul's conversion to the Christian faith?

A. On his journey to Damascus, there suddenly shone round about him a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun. Amazed and confounded, he and his companions fell to the ground; and at the same time a voice from heaven called to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" To which he replied, "Who art thou, Lord?" The voice replied, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." Trembling and astonished, Saul inquired, "Lord what wilt

k Acts xxii. 3; xvi. 37. l Acts viii. 3; ix. 1, 2. m Acts viii.

thou have me to do?" Whereupon he was bid to rise and go to Damascus, and there expect what should be farther revealed to him. He was obedient to the heavenly vision, diligently inquired his Lord's will and pleasure, and immediately followed the directions he received.[n]

Q. In what manner was St. Paul admitted into the Christian Church?

A. St. Paul, having become blind by the extraordinary splendour of the light, was led to Damascus, where he fasted three days, and humbled his soul under a sense of those cruelties he had committed against the Christians. Ananias, a devout man, supposed to be one of the seventy disciples, having been admonished by the Lord in a vision, went to St. Paul, and, laying his hands on him, he received his sight, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, and was made a member of the Church by baptism.[o]

Q. What reasons may be assigned for the miraculous manner of his conversion?

A. St. Paul, who was to publish to the world the glad tidings of salvation, was miraculously converted, in order that he might be in his own person a remarkable instance of the power of the grace of God, and of the readiness of God to pardon the chief of sinners on their repentance. "He obtained mercy, that Jesus Christ might show forth first in him all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."[p] God also was pleased to "show mercy to him," and miraculously to convince him of the truth of the religion which he had persecuted, because what he did was done "ignorantly, in unbelief;"[q] from the heat of natural temper, and from the transport of a false zeal, and not from a wilful opposition to what he knew was the truth. His miraculous conversion also gave great authority to his testimony in behalf of the religion of Christ.*

Q. In what way did St. Paul evidence the sincerity of his conversion?

A. St. Paul evidenced the sincerity of his conversion, by his unwearied zeal and assiduity in preaching that very Jesus whom he had opposed; in confirming and comforting the faithful, whom before he had persecuted; in building

[n] Acts ix. 3, 4, &c. [o] Acts ix. 10, &c. [p] 1 Tim. i. 16. [q] 1 Tim. i. 13.

* The powerful evidence of the truth of the Gospel afforded by the conversion of the apostle Paul, is ably illustrated by Lord Lyttleton, in his "Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul."

up that Church which he had sought to overthrow; cheerfully and resolutely exposing himself to those very difficulties and dangers for the faith, which he had endeavoured to bring on those who professed it.

Q. Where did St. Paul bestow his apostolical labours?

A. This eminent apostle, through the most severe hard ships and perils, proclaimed the Gospel of his Saviour over the whole Roman empire; from Jerusalem, through Arabia, Asia, Greece, round to Illyricum, to Rome, and even to what was then considered the utmost bounds of the western world.[r] Dismayed by no dangers or difficulties, he was zealous and indefatigable in preaching the Gospel, and in writing epistles to confirm in the faith those churches which he had established; thus persevering in "the good fight of faith, till he had finished his course."[s]

Q. Is there not reason to believe that St. Paul planted Christianity in the island of Great-Britain?

A. From the concurring testimony of several of the ancient fathers, Eusebius, Theodoret, St. Jerome,[t] Clemens Romanus,[u] there is reason to believe that St. Paul extended his apostolical labours to the island of Great-Britain.[v]

Q. Where did St. Paul suffer martyrdom?

A. St. Paul was beheaded in the sixty-eighth year of his age, at Rome, under Nero, in the general persecution of the Christians, upon the pretence that they set fire to the city: and from the instrument of his execution, arose the custom of representing him in pictures with a sword in his hand.

Q. What writings did St. Paul leave behind him?

A. St. Paul has left fourteen epistles, which contain an admirable exposition of the plan of salvation, and the most forcible exhortations to the practice of Christian duties. They are principally occupied with vindicating the dispensation of God's mercy to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews, and with enforcing the principle, that justification is to be obtained by faith in the Gospel, without obedience to the ceremonial law of Moses.

Q. Is it not said, that the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans lays down the doctrine of particular election and reprobation?

A. The election and reprobation spoken of by the apostle, relate to God's purpose of calling the Gentiles to the faith

r Acts of Apost. and Clemen. Epist. ad Corinth.
s 2 Tim. iv. 7.
t Hieron in Amos, c. 5.
u Epist. ad Corinth.
v See on this point, Bishop Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit.

of the Gospel, and rejecting the impenitent Jews: the one were "the vessels of mercy," and the other, "vessels of wrath." The apostle vindicates God's sovereign right to dispense his spiritual blessings in this world, according "to the counsel of his own will;" but does not speak of his determining the eternal destiny of mankind, by any unconditional decree. At the last day, "every man shall be judged according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad;" and if it were possible (as he himself says) for Paul, the chosen vessel to the Gentiles, to become "a castaway,"[w] there can be no ground for the assertion, that he advocates the doctrine of absolute election. In the Old Testament, the Jews are styled the "elect" of God, as being separated to his service from the rest of the world; and in the New Testament, for the same reason, the whole body of Christians are called "elect;" and the purpose of God to confer on them the blessings of the Gospel, is styled "the purpose of election." But that there is no arbitrary, unconditional election to eternal life, is evident from Christians being directed to make their "calling and election sure."*

Q. Does the seventeenth article of the Church sanction the doctrine of absolute election?

A. The seventeenth article of the Church does not sanction the doctrine of absolute election. It speaks indeed of those whom God hath "chosen in Christ out of mankind," but does not assert that this election is made "without any foresight of their faith or good works, or any other cause in them moving thereunto," which would render the election absolute. It evidently is the design of this article, to lay down the process and the certainty of salvation, in regard to all "godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the spirit of Christ mortifying the works of the flesh," &c. The article also refers us to "God's promises, as they are set forth in Scripture," where they are certainly conditional. The doctrine of absolute election would render this article contradictory to the other articles, and to the Liturgy of the Church; for the fifteenth article declares that Christ, by "the sacrifice of himself, should take away the sins of the world." The sixteenth article declares, that "we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin." In the Catechism,

[w] 1 Cor. ix. 27.

* The Epistle to the Romans is ably explained by the celebrated Locke, so as to satisfy any candid person that it does not sanction the gloomy and uncomfortable *doctrine of* particular election and reprobation.

the catechumen is directed to profess his faith in "God the Son, who redeemed him and all mankind." And the office for the communion, in full and pointed language, declares that Christ hath "made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world;" declarations wholly inconsistent with the opinions, that Christ died only for the elect, and that those who have once received grace, can never finally fall away.*

Q. What may we learn from the commemoration of St. Paul's conversion?

A. The consideration of St. Paul's conversion should lead us to adore the miraculous grace of God which called him to be an apostle, and to bless God for the inestimable advantages we enjoy from the labours and instructions of this zealous apostle. The mercy of God to him who was "the chief of sinners," should inspire us with confidence to apply to God for pardon under a sense of our guilt. The zeal and faithfulness of St. Paul after his conversion, should excite us to show the sincerity of our repentance, by actions most opposed to our former sins.

Q. As St. Paul is represented as having "consented" to the death of St. Stephen, he may be said to be a partaker of the guilt of those who slew this holy martyr. State what is meant by partaking in other men's sins.

A. We may be said to partake in other men's sins, when we abet or connive at the commission of them; or when, after the commission, we approve or justify them.

Q. In what ways may we abet or connive at wicked actions, so as to become partakers in the guilt of them?

A. Magistrates, masters, or parents, become sharers in the guilt of any evil actions, when they do not use their power to prevent or punish them; when they order and command the commission; or when they do not refuse to concur in or countenance any improper measures. The ministers of the Church may become partakers of other men's guilt, when they neglect faithfully to declare the terms of salvation, and to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come; and all persons who set a bad example, become

* That the Episcopal Church in America does not receive the seventeenth article, in a sense which favours the doctrine of absolute election, is evident from the circumstance, that, in the General Convention of the Church in 1801, which formally ratified the articles, it is believed, there was not one member who was friendly to those opinions concerning the divine decrees which are usually styled *Calvinistic*.

answerable for all the pernicious effect which that example may have on others.

Q. In what ways may we become partakers of men's sins after they are committed?

A. We may become partakers of men's sins after they are committed, either by openly approving them, by being secretly pleased with them, or by praising, justifying, and defending the commission of them.

CHAPTER XV.

The PRESENTATION *of CHRIST in the Temple, commonly called, The* PURIFICATION *of* ST. *MARY the* VIRGIN, *February* 2.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT festival does the Church celebrate this day?

A. The Church this day celebrates the presentation of Christ in the temple, commonly called, The Purification of St. Mary the Virgin.

Q. What is the design of the epistle and gospel for the day?

A. The epistle contains a prediction of the first advent of the Messiah, when he should come to his temple; which prediction was fulfilled at the presentation of Christ in the temple, of which the gospel gives an account.

Q. What was the Jewish law of purification with which the blessed Virgin complied?

A. By the Jewish law of purification,[z] all the women were obliged to separate themselves from the congregation forty days after the birth of a male child, and eighty days after the birth of a female: and when the days of their purifying were fulfilled, if they were rich, they brought a lamb of the first year for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a sin-offering; if poor, two turtles or two young pigeons, which the priest offered before the Lord, and made an atonement for them.

Q. What does this rite of purification import?

[z] Lev. xii.

A. This rite of purification was designed to teach the hereditary stain and corruption of human nature. As an acknowledgment and proof of this, the child was not only circumcised, but the mother cleansed by an offering for sin.

Q. What did the law require concerning the presentation of the first-born?

A. The law required that every male child should be consecrated and set apart to the immediate service of God.[y] When God exempted from the destruction which he brought upon the Egyptians, the first-born of the Hebrews, he commanded that they should be dedicated to the service of the altar, or redeemed at the price of five shekels;[z] and though, afterwards, the Levites were substituted instead of the first-born for the service of the tabernacle,[a] yet the traces of the old law remained, and mothers were obliged to present their first-born in the temple, and to pay a ransom to the priest. The price of redemption was the same both to rich and poor, as were the charges of their burials; admonishing us of the equality which nature hath established between all men, in coming into the world and going out of it.

Q. What doth the redeeming of the first-born signify to us?

A. The redemption of the first-born under the Jewish law, may be considered as referring to the redemption of God's people, called "the Church of the first-born,"[b] who are written in heaven, and redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ.

Q. Since there was no impurity in the birth of our blessed Saviour, and since the blessed Virgin contracted no impurity by bringing him forth, why did they submit to these laws?

A. Being born under the law, it became our Saviour to fulfil all righteousness; and the blessed Virgin, by complying with the law, expressed great humility, obedience, and reverence to public institutions.

Q. What should we learn from this exemplary submission of the blessed Virgin to the rites of the law?

A. From this submission of the blessed Virgin to rites of which she could not stand in need, we may learn, that the public institutions and ordinances of religion ought to be obeyed, when not contrary to the laws of God, even though the ends to be answered by them, may not be answered by them in our particular cases.

y Exod. xiii 2, 15. z Numb. xviii. 16. a Numb xiii. 16, 17, 18. b Heb. xii. 23.

Q. What offerings did the blessed Virgin make?

A. The blessed Virgin made the offerings of the poor, a pair of turtles, or two young pigeons.[c] The Saviour chose a humble and poor family when he came into the world, displaying his great goodness and condescension; for "though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich."[d]

Q. Was not our blessed Saviour, at his presentation in the temple, manifested to the devout Simeon and Anna?

A. Simeon being a just and devout man, waiting for the consolation of Israel, the appearance of the promised Messiah, God was pleased to reveal to him, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ; and at this very time when Christ was presented in the temple, he was, by the guidance of God's Spirit, brought thither:[e] and the prophetess Anna, constantly and devoutly attending the service of the temple, came in at the same instant.[f] They both gave thanks to God, and spoke of the Saviour to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem; Simeon pouring forth the grateful joy of his heart in a devout hymn of praise.

Q. What may we learn from this eminent privilege which was conferred on Simeon and Anna?

A. From this privilege conferred on Simeon and Anna, as a reward for their exemplary piety and devotion, we should be excited constantly and devoutly to attend the ordinances of religion, in the steadfast hope, that God will manifest to our souls his mercy and favour.

Q. What may we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. Our Saviour, when an infant, was dedicated by his pious mother to the service of God: hence we should learn the duty of devoting our children to God in baptism, and of bringing them up in the knowledge and fear of him. The legal rite of purification to which the blessed Virgin submitted, should impress on us the necessity of that purity of heart and mind, without which we are unworthy to approach most holy God. The poverty of the family in which Christ was born, which appears from the meanness of the offering that the blessed Virgin presented, should powerfully impress upon us the infinite condescension of our blessed Redeemer, and teach us, that poverty and meanness of condition in the world, are no obstacles to the divine favour. Imitating the

[c] Luke ii. 24. [d] 2 Cor. viii. 9 [e] Luke ii. 25, &c. [f] Luke ii. 37, &c.

pious zeal of the holy Simeon and Anna, we should devoutly bless God that he has manifested to us the Saviour, the consolation of Israel, the desire of all nations; that he has shed the light of salvation on us who sat in the region of darkness, and in the shadow of death, and has guided our feet in the way of peace. Above all, the meekness and lowliness which the blessed Virgin uniformly displayed, and which rendered her the distinguished object of divine favour, should teach us the high importance, obligation, and excellence, of the virtue of humility.

Q. Is not humility eminently a Christian virtue?

A. Humility is eminently a Christian virtue, being taught in the greatest perfection by Christ, both by precept and his own blessed example. The heathen philosophers had so little idea of this virtue, that they designated by the term *humility*, the opprobrious qualities, meanness and baseness of mind.

Q. Explain the virtue of humility.

A. Founded on a deep sense of the weakness and guilt of human nature, humility will prevent the Christian from overvaluing the advantages and talents which he may possess, and will lead him to refer them all to the unmerited bounty and grace of God. It will repress the immoderate desire of the honours and applauses of the world, and will prevent us from having recourse to mean and unworthy methods of obtaining them. This virtue will prevent us from being unduly solicitous that our virtues and talents should be known to the world, and will repress an ostentatious and vainglorious display of them: it will lead us to receive with thankfulness just reproofs, and to bear with patience injuries and insults: it will lead us to pity and compassionate the sins and follies of our fellow-men, to behave with all due respect to our superiors, with courtesy and affability to our inferiors, and to descend to the meanest offices for the good of our neighbour; not contemning him, because inferior to us in any advantages of body or mind. Finally, under the influence of an humble sense of our offences against God, which merit his just wrath and displeasure, we shall receive with resignation and submission, all the trials and afflictions which he allots us.

Q. Wherein appears the folly of pride?

A. Pride leads us to value ourselves very frequently upon things which add no true worth to us, which are in their own nature perishable, and of which we are not proprietors,

but stewards. Every thing that we enjoy, we hold at the disposal of God; and it is the extreme of folly, therefore, to pride ourselves on what we hold on such a dependent tenure. Pride leads us to overlook our defects, and thus hinders our improvement; and inflaming us with an opinion that we deserve more than we possess, excites discontent and fretfulness, which entirely mar our enjoyment. The proud man also misses the very end at which he aims; for, instead of receiving the honour and applause of mankind, he becomes the just object of their scorn and contempt.

Q. Is not humility the foundation of all other virtues?

A. The distinguishing excellence of humility arises from its being the foundation of all other virtues. Inspiring a sense of our own frailty and unworthiness, and of the majesty and infinite excellence of God, it removes our vanity and self-sufficiency, which are the great obstacles of faith, and makes us ready to believe what God reveals, and to render implicit obedience to him. It excites us to put our confidence in God, from the sense that, being weak and miserable ourselves, without him we can do nothing. It increases our love to God, by making us sensible how unworthy we are of the least of those favours we receive from him. It teaches us to rejoice in the prosperity of our neighbour, by disposing us to form the most favourable opinion of his worth. It disposes us to relieve those wants, and compassionate those afflictions in others, which we ourselves have deserved. It makes us patient under all the troubles and calamities of life, from the conviction that we deserve these calamities as the punishment of our sins. The most exalted acts of virtue will lose their value in the sight of God, if stained with pride and vainglory.

Q. What are the most powerful considerations to excite and cherish the virtue of humility?

A. The most powerful considerations to excite humility are, that all the advantages we enjoy are the unmerited gifts of God's bounty; and that, being liable daily to transgress against him, we are dependent on the succours of his grace, and stand daily in deed of his pardoning mercy.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF THE SOLEMN FAST OF LENT.

Q. WHAT *do you mean by the season of Lent?*

A. Lent, in the old Saxon signifying the *Spring*, has been applied to the Spring fast, or the time of humiliation observed by Christians before the festival of Easter.

Q. What was the probable origin of this fast?

A. This fast probably, like other Christian observances, is of Jewish origin, corresponding with the preparation of the Jews for the yearly expiation; their humiliation being forty days before the expiation, and ours is forty days before the expiation of the sins of the whole world, by the death of Christ.

Q. Is not this fast of great antiquity?

A. From the very first ages of Christianity, it was customary for Christians to set apart some time for mortification and self-denial, to prepare for the solemn feast of Easter.[g]

Q. Why is this solemn season limited to forty days?

A. The number *forty* was very anciently appropriated to seasons of repentance and humiliation. This was the number of days, during which God covered the earth with the deluge;[h] the number of years in which the children of Israel did penance in the wilderness;[i] the number of days Moses fasted in the mount,[j] and Elijah in the wilderness:[k] the Ninevites had this number of days allowed for their repentance;[l] and our Lord, when he was pleased to fast in the wilderness, observed the same length of time.[m]

Q. Wherein consists the propriety of observing this fast?

A. The duties of humiliation and repentance are of constant obligation, and are the essential and uniform characteristics of the sincere Christian. But there is great propriety in setting apart a season for the more particular and solemn discharge of duties, which otherwise might be entirely forgotten, or only imperfectly and superficially discharged. When the mournful anniversary approaches of the sufferings and death of Christ, it is highly proper that

g Euse. Eccle. Hist. lib. v. cap. 24. h Gen. vii. 4. i Num. xiv. 34.
j Deut. ix. 9. k 1 Kings xix. 8. l Jonah iii. 4. m Matt. iv. 2.

the Church should lay aside the songs of praise and triumph which distinguished the preceding joyful festivals, and in humility and penitence prepare to sympathize in the sorrows of her Lord; it is highly proper that Christians should call to mind the sins which brought their Saviour to the cross, and express their deep sorrow for them by acts of humiliation and self-denial. The solemn and devout exercises of this holy season tend also to strengthen in the soul the sentiments of piety and virtue, and to prepare us for successfully encountering the temptations of the world.

Q. How was the season of Lent observed by the primitive Christians?

A. This season of humiliation was observed by the primitive Christians with the most rigid strictness. No marriages were allowed. Their festivals were transferred from the ordinary week days to Sunday or Saturday; which last day, among the eastern Christians, was a festival like Sunday. Except on these two days, the Eucharist was not consecrated during Lent; that being an act more suitable to festivals than fasts. The primitive Christians, during this season, exhibited every external mark of deep penitence and sorrow, particularly abstinence and fasting. They extended the fasting on every day in Lent, beyond the hour of three in the afternoon, at which time other fasts ended, to the evening.

Q. How should devout Christians spend their time during this season of Lent?

A. With a design to punish ourselves for our past transgressions, and to express our sorrow for them, we should practice the duties of abstinence and fasting, according to the circumstances of our health, and our outward condition in the world. Our external behaviour should correspond with the humiliation and seriousness we now profess. Public assemblies for pleasure and diversion should therefore now be avoided, and the festivities of social intercourse in some degree abated. The public services of the Church should be regularly and reverently attended; and we should devote a more than usual portion of our time to religious retirement; to self-examination, penitence, and prayer; to acts of charity and mercy; especially to devout and serious meditation on religious subjects.

Q. Explain the duty of religious meditation.

A. The duty of religious meditation consists in such a

serious application of the mind to any Christian doctrine or virtue, as will dispose firmly to believe and embrace it, or earnestly and vigorously to endeavour to acquire it.

Q. How ought we to prepare ourselves for the exercise of this duty?

A. Before we enter on this duty, we should impress upon our minds a lively sense of the holy presence and inspection of God; that we are unworthy, on account of our sins, to present ourselves before him; and that we are incapable, without his assistance, to think any thing that is good. Adoring his infinite majesty with profound reverence, we should humbly beseech him to enlighten our understandings, to discern the nature and excellence of the divine truths and duties that are to be the subjects of our meditations, and to incline our wills to embrace and choose them.

Q. In what manner ought we to conclude the duty of religious meditation?

A. We should conclude the exercise of this duty, by earnestly beseeching God to affect our minds with a constant sense of our obligations to him; that he would enable us to perform those resolutions which we may have made of advancing in piety and virtue; that he would not leave us to ourselves, but would so assist us with his grace, that we may persevere in his love and service to the end of our lives.

Q. What are the advantages that result from the exercise of holy meditation?

A. Religious meditation will have a powerful influence on our hearts and life, and is admirably calculated to quicken our progress in all the graces of God's holy Spirit. It will illuminate our understandings with the knowledge of our duty, and store our memories with the most powerful reasons to excite us to the performance of it. It will quicken the sensibility of conscience, and powerfully urge its remonstrances. It will tend to increase the reverence and ardour of our supplications to God, by impressing us with his greatness, and our unworthiness. It will habituate our minds to spiritual objects, and raise them above the perishing things of this life. It will strengthen our holy purposes, arm us against temptation, and inflame our souls with earnest desires to obtain the favour of God, as our supreme and satisfying good.

CHAPTER XVII.

ASH-WEDNESDAY, OR THE FIRST DAY OF LENT.

A FAST.

Q. WHY *does the fast of forty days, called* Lent, *begin on Ash-Wednesday, which is forty-six days before Easter?*

A. Sunday, being the day on which we commemorate the resurrection of our Saviour, does not allow of fasting. If, then, the six Sundays are deducted out of the six weeks of Lent, there remain only thirty-six days of fasting. To make up, therefore, the number of forty, four days are added from the week preceding, which makes Wednesday the first day of Lent, called Ash-Wednesday.

Q. Why is the first day of Lent called Ash-Wednesday?

A. This name is derived from the custom that prevailed in the primitive Church, for penitents at this time to express their humiliation, by lying in sackcloth and ashes. By the coarseness of sackcloth, they ranked themselves among the meanest and lowest condition of men. By ashes, and sometimes earth, cast upon their heads, they made themselves lower than the lowest of the creatures of God, and put themselves in mind of their mortality, which would reduce them to dust and ashes.

Q. What was the discipline of the primitive Church at the beginning of Lent?

A. In the primitive Church, such persons as stood convicted of notorious crimes, were put to open penance: they were excommunicated by the Bishop, and not admitted to reconciliation with the Church, until after the most public testimonies of sorrow and repentance, and the greatest signs of humiliation."

Q. How were penitents re-admitted into the Church?

A. When they had finished the time prescribed for undergoing these severities, if their repentance, upon examination, was found to be real, they were re-admitted into the Church, by the imposition of the hands of the clergy; the party to be absolved kneeling before the Bishop, or, in his

" Tertullian De Penitentia.

absence, before the Presbyter; who, laying his hand upon his head, solemnly blessed and absolved him; whereupon he was received with universal joy, and restored to the communion of the Church.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the form of service for the day?

A. On this day, some solemn forms of supplication and humiliation are appointed to be used at morning prayer; and the *penitential* psalms of David are appointed to be used instead of the psalms for the day. The first lesson for the morning, taken from Isaiah, displays the guilt and depravity of man, and concludes by pointing out to him the way of salvation through a Redeemer. The second lesson, from St. Luke, is an excellent summary of our Saviour's sermon on the mount, and enforces those Christian graces and virtues, without which all expressions of penitence are empty and vain. The first lesson for the evening contains an animating encouragement to repentance, in God's declaration of mercy to the Ninevites; and the second lesson enforces the same duty, by displaying the second coming of Christ to judge the world. The epistle and the gospel caution us against resting in external expressions of sorrow, while our hearts are devoid of the emotions of real contrition. Thus admirably calculated is the service of the day, to enforce the duties of humiliation and repentance.

Q. Explain the nature of true repentance.

A. Repentance consists in such a lively sorrow for our past sins, and in such sincere and effectual resolutions, through divine grace, to forsake them, as produce a complete change in our principles, desires, and conduct; a change so great and universal, that it is styled in Scripture, a *new nature.*

Q. What are the considerations that should excite us to sorrow for our sins?

A. Who can forbear grieving, when he reflects, that by his transgression he has forfeited the favour of God, the only source of bliss, and incurred shame, remorse, everlasting misery? Who can forbear grieving, when he reflects, that he has been inattentive to the salvation of his immortal soul; that he has been ungrateful to his gracious Benefactor, and best Friend; that he hath affronted Heaven with the very blessings he received from thence; that he hath fallen under the heavy displeasure of God, whose infinite patience he has abused; that *he has* "despised the riches of God's

goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, which should have led him to repentance?"

Q. In what manner ought we to express our sorrow for our sins?

A. We should express our sorrow for our sins, by sincere and humble confession of them; by fasting, and other acts of humiliation and self-denial;[e] by humble and earnest supplication of the mercy and grace of God, in steadfast reliance on the merits of his Son Jesus Christ.

Q. How should our resolutions of amendment be formed in order to their being effectual?

A. Our resolution of amendment should be formed on a serious consideration of the difficulties and discouragements of a pious and virtuous course, and of its succours and rewards: they should extend to every sacrifice that we are required to make, to every duty that we are enjoined to perform; and they should lead us to avoid all the indulgences and situations that may betray us into sin. Above all, we should frequently and earnestly beseech God to strengthen our weakness, and confirm our holy resolutions; and we should often repeat and renew these resolutions, particularly when we approach the holy table of the Lord.

Q. Are not reparation and restitution necessary fruits of repentance?

A. If we have wronged or injured our neighbour, we must make him all the reparation in our power. We must earnestly and sedulously endeavour to reclaim all those whom we may have drawn into sin, either by our bad example, or by neglect of duty towards them. If we have injured the good name of our neighbour, we must acknowledge our fault, and vindicate his reputation: and if we wronged him in his estate, either by fraud or force, we must make restitution, either to himself or his heirs; or when they cannot be discovered, we must appropriate whatever we have thus unjustly acquired, to pious and benevolent purposes. These fruits of repentance will always accompany it when it is genuine; and without these fruits, all expressions of repentance are vain and presumptuous, and will only aggravate our condemnation.

Q. Whence arises the necessity of repentance?

A. Repentance is one of the indispensable conditions of salvation. The meritorious cause of our salvation, is the

[e] *Ezra x. 6, &c. Psal. lxix 10. Neh. ix. 1. Matt. xxvi. 75. Acts ix. 9.*

atonement made for sin by our blessed Saviour. But this salvation is not absolute, but conditional. Remission of sin, through the merits of Christ, is granted only to the penitent; for our Saviour hath joined these together, in his commission to the apostles: "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name throughout all nations." Until that change in our evil tempers and dispositions, which true repentance is designed to produce, takes place, we are not fit for enjoying the fruition of God's holy presence. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Q. What do you mean by the forgiveness of sins?

A. By the forgiveness of sins, is meant a discharge and release from the punishment due to sin. By transgressing God's laws, we contract guilt, we become obnoxious to divine justice; but, by the forgiveness of our sins, we are freed and delivered from that punishment which we have deserved. Our Saviour Christ having rendered a perfect obedience to the divine law, and sustained in our stead the awful penalty annexed to transgressing it, God can now be just, and yet justify the sinner who repents and believes.

Q. Wherein consists the guilt of delaying repentance?

A. To delay our repentance, by which alone we can be restored to the favour of God, to some future period, which is always uncertain, is not only the greatest folly, but it is a criminal abuse of his long-suffering patience, an impious preference of the slavery of sin to the joys of his service, a presumptuous contempt of his laws, and of the denunciations of his justice. Offended at our impiety and presumption, he may swear in his wrath, that we shall not enter into his rest.

Q. Is not a death-bed repentance very uncertain?

A. Though a death-bed repentance is not absolutely impossible, since it may please God, who sees the heart, to accept the sincerity of our sorrow and the ardour of our desires; yet a sincere repentance, amidst the distresses, the agitations, and pangs of a sick-bed, appears very improbable. At such a period, repentance will most probably be founded more on an apprehension of divine wrath, than on a just sense of the evil of sin, and of its ingratitude and baseness; and will not be, therefore, that sincere, sober, and genuine repentance which God will vouchsafe to accept, or which would produce sincere and thorough reformation of heart and life.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ST. MATTHIAS THE APOSTLE, FEBRUARY 24.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *is meant by an* apostle?

A. An *apostle* singnifies in general a *messenger.* This name was applied by our Saviour to those select persons whom he chose to be the witnesses of his life, his miracles, his sufferings, and resurrection; and, under the direction of the Holy Ghost, to proclaim the Gospel to the world, and to found the Church, and provide for its government.

Q. Why did Christ choose the precise number of twelve apostles?

A. Our Saviour chose twelve apostles, probably in allusion to the twelve patriarchs, as the founders of their several tribes, or to the twelve chief heads or rulers of the tribes of Israel.[p]

Q. How were the apostles, who were obscure and illiterate persons, enabled to proclaim and to establish the Gospel throughout the world?

A. The apostles were competent judges of the facts they attested, having been eye-witnesses of them; and in regard to doctrine, it was impossible they could err, being immediately directed by the divine and unerring Spirit of truth. By the miraculous powers with which they were invested they were enabled to establish the Gospel, in opposition to the prejudices, passions, and power that assailed it.

Q. Was St. Matthias one of the twelve apostles originally chosen by our Saviour?

A. St. Matthias was not among the twelve apostles first chosen; but when Judas, one of the twelve penetrated with remorse for having basely betrayed his Master, killed himself, Matthias was chosen in his room.

Q. What is the design of the epistle and gospel?

A. The epistle records the fall of Judas, and the election of Matthias; and the gospel, by representing the blessings of salvation as hid from the great men of the world, and revealed to the humble and contemned apostles, excites us to

[p] Matt. xix. 28

come unto Christ with those meek and lowly dispositions which are always a sure passport to his favour.

Q. Had Judas the authority and gifts of an apostle?

A. Though Judas was a person of base and corrupt designs, yet having been numbered by Christ among the apostles, he obtained part of their ministry, and was equally empowered with the rest to preach and work miracles.

Q. What may we learn from this fact?

A. Hence we may learn, that the wickedness of a minister does not invalidate his commission, or render useless or ineffectual his office; and that the efficacy of a sacred ordinance does not depend upon the personal virtues of him who administers it, but upon the divine institution and blessing.

Q. How was St. Matthias chosen to be an apostle?

A. St. Peter having recommended the filling up of the vacancy occasioned by the apostacy of Judas, the Christians assembled at Jeruaslem, and appointed two, Joseph, called Barnabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias; and having solemnly prayed to God, who knew the hearts of all men, that he would be pleased to show which of these two he would choose, they gave forth lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.[e] This mode of determining doubtful and difficult cases, and of electing judges and magistrates by lot, was in use both among Jews and Gentiles.

Q. How was St. Matthias qualified for the apostleship?

A. Having been a constant attendant upon our Saviour all the time of his ministry, probably as one of the seventy disciples; having been a witness of our Saviour's resurrection, and of the principal events of his life, he was fully qualified to proclaim abroad those facts concerning the Saviour, of which he had equal knowledge with the rest of the apostles.

Q. Where did St. Matthias preach the Gospel?

A. After the Holy Ghost was conferred upon him with the rest of the apostles, he devoted his ministerial labours, in the first instance, to Judea; and afterwards, according to St. Jerome, travelled to the countries eastward, where, after many labours and sufferings, he obtained the crown of martyrdom.

Q. What instruction does this festival convey?

A. The solemn manner in which St. Matthias was chosen

[e] Acts i. 24 &c.

to the apostleship, should lead all who are concerned in selecting persons for the ministry, to use the greatest caution, and solemnly to invoke the divine guidance and blessing; and should teach all who are candidates for the ministry, seriously to examine their own hearts, whether they possess that sincere zeal for the glory of God, and the good of souls, which only will authorize them in trusting that they are called by the Holy Ghost to the office of the ministry. Since the wickedness of Judas did not invalidate his commission, we may learn that we shall not be justified in withdrawing from the ordinances of God, because he who administers them is a bad man. The lamentable fall of Judas, and the remorse which he discovered, should teach us carefully to avoid the sin of covetousness, which was the cause of his fall; to preserve our consciences free from guilt, which will rob us of our repose and peace; and diligently to watch over our hearts and ways, lest we be betrayed into sin, and ultimately be led into apostacy from God.

Q. Explain the duty of watchfulness.

A. The duty of watchfulness consists in wisely foreseeing the dangers which threaten our souls, and then in diligently endeavouring to escape or overcome them.

Q. How may we foresee the dangers that threaten us?

A. We should diligently endeavour to find out what are the temptations to which, from natural constitution, from professional pursuits, or from the company with which we associate, we are most exposed; that thus we may discover the first beginnings of evil, and be on our guard against the first approaches of our spiritual enemy.

Q. How may we preserve our piety against the assaults of temptation?

A. Our safety will generally consist in avoiding temptation whenever it is in our power: but when called to encounter it, we should "put on the whole armour of God." In order to overcome the temptation to increase our property by unlawful means, we should impress ourselves with a lively belief of the constant presence of God with us, and of the solemn account we must render at his tribunal. In order to overcome the seducing temptations of pleasure, we should live under the lively hope of enjoying those pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore: we should gird ourselves with truth, that no profit may prevail upon us to be *insincere* or faithless in our words and promises: we should

guard ourselves with righteousness, and keep our consciences void of offence: and then we may resolutely sustain the trials and persecutions to which we may be called. By the sword of the spirit, by lively confidence in the animating promises of the word of God, and by earnest prayer to him for the succours of his grace, we shall be enabled to overcome the assaults of temptation, and to put to flight all the enemies of our salvation.

Q. Is not watchfulness an important and necessary duty?

A. Possessing a frail and depraved nature, surrounded by innumerable temptations, and exposed to the secret, but artful and powerful assaults of the great adversary, by diligent watchfulness alone shall we be able to persevere in the service of God, and to avoid that remorse and misery which will for ever overwhelm us, should we finally become the victims of temptation.

CHAPTER XIX.

The ANNUNCIATION *of the blessed* VIRGIN *MARY, March* 25.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT is meant by the annunciation of the blessed Virgin, which the Church this day celebrates?

A. By the annunciation of the blessed Virgin is meant, the declaration which the angel Gabriel made to the blessed Mary,[r] that she should be the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ; that this her Son should be great, and called the Son of the Highest; that the Lord God should give unto him the throne of his father David; that he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and that of his kingdom there shall be no end.[s] On him should be settled a spiritual kingdom, of which the temporal one of David was a type; he should be vested with the absolute government of the Church, the spiritual house of Jacob. The kingdom of David was to come to an end, but the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah was to last for ever.

Q. What have you to observe in regard to the epistle and gospel for the day?

[r] Luke i. 32.

[s] Isa. ix. 6, 7.

A. The epistle contains the prophecy in Isaiah concerning the miraculous birth of Christ; and the gospel recites the fulfilment of this prediction.

Q. What was the salutation of the angel to the blessed Virgin?

A. The angel addressed the blessed Virgin with the salutation—"Hail, thou that art highly favoured; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." The address was suited to the glorious tidings that were to follow, and led the Virgin to expect, that, as a reward for her humble, holy, and pious graces, some distinguished honour was to be conferred upon her.

Q. What were the circumstances that followed this salutation of the angel?

A. Judging herself unworthy of this distinguished honour, Mary was troubled at the saying of the angel; and penetrated with profound amazement at the assurance, that of her should be born the promised Messiah, "the Son of the Highest," she inquires—"How can this be?" The angel then reveals the miraculous conception of the Saviour by the power of the Holy Ghost; and to confirm her faith, declares to her the display of the power of God in the case of her cousin Elizabeth. Mary, yielding full faith to the celestial messenger, humbly and piously exclaimed—"Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word." Afterwards, on a visit to Elizabeth, she burst forth in a thankful expression of the distinguishing goodness of God to her, celebrating his love and mercy in that sublime hymn styled the *Magnificat*[t]

Q. What does the Church direct us to believe concerning the incarnation of the Son of God, which took place immediately on this annunciation of the angel to the blessed Virgin?

A. "The Son, who is the word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man; who truly suffered, was crucified, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men."[u]

[t] *Luke i. 46.* [u] Articles of Religion, Art. 2.

Q. What is the meaning of the Church, when she says, that the godhead and manhood are joined together in one person, whereof is one Christ?

A. The design of the Church, in declaring that the divine and human natures are united together in the person of Christ, is to express, that there is a true and proper communication of names, characters, and properties, from the two natures, to the one person made up of them.

Q. Is not the doctrine of the incarnation incomprehensible?

A. Our feeble powers cannot comprehend the mysterious union of the divine and human nature in the person of Christ; neither can we comprehend the infinite and eternal essence of God, or the secret tie that connects together in one person the soul and body. If, therefore, we reject the doctrine of the incarnation, because it is incomprehensible, we must also reject the existence of God, and the union of the soul and body; both of which baffle our comprehension. Every truth relating to the divine nature, must necessarily transcend the comprehension of a finite creature. To believe in the mystery of the incarnation, it should be sufficient for us to know, that God has revealed it in his holy word, and that the most glorious blessings are connected with it.

Q. In what sense may the blessed Virgin Mary be styled the mother of our Lord?

A. As the eternal Son of God took upon him our nature, and was born of the Virgin, in this respect she may be called the mother of our Lord.[o]

Q. What reverence do we owe to the blessed Virgin?

A. We should highly esteem and reverence the blessed Virgin, who was distinguished for her humility, virtue, and piety; and who enjoyed the exalted honour of being the mother of our blessed Lord. But to invoke her mercy and aid, or to offer up our prayers through her mediation, thus to render unto her divine honours, would be the most impious idolatry, and presumptuous insult to that divine Saviour, who is the only "Mediator between God and man."

Q. What instruction does this festival afford us?

A. We should be excited to imitate, on all occasions, the modesty and humility of the blessed Virgin, who did not permit herself to be unduly elated with the distinguished honour conferred upon her. The wonderful condescension of the Son of God in taking our nature upon him, should

[o] Luke i. 43.

lead us evermore to adore and praise him, and to endeavour to fulfil the design of his coming into the world, which was to redeem us from all iniquity. As he was pleased to be united to our nature, so it should be our supreme care and business to be spiritually united to him, that thus we may partake of the blessings of his redemption.

Q. By what means are Christians united to Christ?

A. The Scriptures uniformly refer to the sacrament of baptism, as the rite in which our union with Christ commenced.[w] In this sacrament, on our profession to believe what Christ hath revealed, to perform what he hath commanded, to renounce whatever he hath forbidden, and steadfastly to love and serve him, we are made members of that mystical body, the Church, whereof he is the head. Our union with Christ must be maintained, by "continuing steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers;"[x] we must steadfastly adhere to that form of sound words handed down from the apostolic age; we must maintain fellowship with the apostles, and, through them, with Christ, by submitting to the priesthood, in the orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, who derive their authority, by regular transmission, from Christ, the head of the Church; we must constantly and devoutly partake of the Lord's supper, and attend on the public prayers of the Church. Thus continuing in communion with the Church, we shall "grow up united into him in all things, which is the head, Jesus Christ."[y]

Q. Can our communion with the Church be sincere, or will it be effectual to our salvation, unless it produces holiness of heart and life?

A. Upon their admission into the Church by baptism, all Christians receive the influences of the Holy Spirit, to enable them to work out their salvation, and to secure, by a life of faith and holy obedience, the remission of sins, the favour of God, and everlasting life; blessings which, in baptism, were conditionally conferred. Communion with the Church is the appointed mode by which their faith and obedience are to be quickened and preserved, and made acceptable unto God; but unless their communion with the Church conduces to this end, and advances them into a conformity to Christ, their holy and divine head, it is not sincere, and will not be effectual to their salvation. Those who, admitted

w 1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27; Rom. &c. x Acts ii. 42. y Eph. iv. 15.

into the Church, live in a course of sin and disobedience, will incur the heavy condemnation of having resisted God's grace, of having done despite unto his Spirit, of having contemned the offers of divine mercy, and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing.

Q. What are the distinguishing blessings annexed to sincere communion with the Church?

A. The sincere members of the Church of Christ enjoy a sure and express title to the remission of their sins; to the prevailing intercession of Jesus, their gracious advocate, with the Father; to the powerful aids and consolations of the Holy Spirit; to the enlivening favour and protection of God; to a participation of the immortal glories to which the Church of the redeemed will finally be advanced. All mankind are in the hands of an infinitely merciful and righteous God, who will judge them according to their works; but his covenanted and distinguishing mercies are the peculiar portion of the sincere members of the Church, the mystical body of Christ, his beloved Son.

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE SUNDAYS IN LENT.

Q. HOW are the Sundays in Lent named?

A. The Sundays in Lent are generally termed from their number, being called the *first*, *second*, &c. Sunday in Lent. but the fourth Sunday is sometimes called *Midlent* Sunday; and the fifth Sunday is called *Passion* Sunday, though this name might perhaps be more properly applied to the following Sunday, which is the Sunday next before Easter, and which has obtained the appellation of *Palm* Sunday, in commemoration of our Saviour's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the multitude that attended him strewed palm branches in his way.

Q. What is the design of the Church on these Sundays?

A. Sunday being a festival, the Church allows us to interrupt our fasts on the Sundays in Lent; but it is still her earnest desire to keep us in mind of the solemn duties which are appropriate to the season. Accordingly, in the epistles for the three first Sundays, we are taught the necessity of

mortifying our sinful passions; the epistle for the fourth Sunday shows, by a striking allegory, the superior excellence of that covenant which Christ, by his death, sealed, over the law of Moses; the epistle for the fifth Sunday points out to us the divine purifying efficacy of the blood of Christ; and the epistle for the Sunday next before Easter, exhorts us to humility, from the consideration of the infinite condescension of the Son of God, in submitting, for our sakes, to the death of the cross. The gospel, for the first Sunday, to animate us to resist temptation, recites the history of Christ's temptation in the wilderness: the gospels for the four following Sundays, with a view to excite us to the imitation of the benevolence of Christ, and to confirm our faith in him, set before us some striking instances of his divine compassion and power, and of that forcible reasoning whereby he vindicated his divine claims: the gospel for the Sunday next before Easter, commences the recital of the sufferings of Christ, which the ensuing week more particularly commemorates.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE PASSION-WEEK.

Q. BY what names has this week been commonly called?

A. The week next before Easter has been called *Passion Week*, because it is particularly devoted to the commemoration of the passion and death of Christ. It is also called the *Great Week*, on account of the important transactions which it witnessed, and the exalted blessings derived to us from them: and it is also called the *Holy Week*, from the extraordinary and solemn exercises of devotion which the Church prescribes in it.

Q. How was this week observed by the primitive Christians?

A. This week was observed by the primitive Christians with great strictness of fasting and humiliation. They applied themselves to prayer, both in public and private; to hearing and reading God's holy word; and to exercising a most solemn repentance for those sins which occasioned the sufferings of the Lord of life.

Q. How is this week now observed by the Church?

A. The Church calls us every day this week to the contemplation of our Lord's sufferings, which are recited in the lessons, epistles, and gospels; in order that our humiliation may be increased by the consideration of the sufferings of Christ; and that, with penitent hearts, and firm resolutions of dying unto sin, we may accompany the Saviour through the several stages of his bitter passion. In conformity with the design of the Church, we should, in this week, enlarge our private devotions, and abstain from all indulgences inconsistent with the seriousness that should possess our hearts.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the THURSDAY *before* EASTER.

Q. WHAT is this day called?

A. This day is called [*Dies Mandati*] Mandate, or Maunday-Thursday, because our Saviour commanded his apostles to commemorate the holy sacrament of the supper, which he this day instituted, after the celebration of the passover.

Q. What have you to remark concerning the epistle and gospel for the day?

A. The gospel for the day is suitable to the season, treating of our Saviour's passion; and the epistle contains an account of the institution of the Lord's supper.

Q. Explain the nature and end of the Lord's supper, or holy Eucharist.

A. The holy Eucharist is a sacrament of the Church, in which bread and wine, consecrated to represent the body and blood of Christ, are offered unto God, in "remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby." Christ, when he instituted the sacrament of the supper, blessed bread and wine, to represent his body and blood then, by these symbols, sacramentally given or offered, and shed for the sins of the world: and by enjoining it on his apostles, thus "to show forth his death till his coming again," he gave them and their successors authority to consecrate bread and wine to be symbols of his body and blood, and to offer them up as a

memorial unto God. The bread and wine thus offered unto God, are to be received by the faithful, as a solemn pledge of their being restored to the favour of God. In his holy sacrament, the Church, under the symbols of bread and wine, commemorates the passion and sacrifice of Christ, in order that all who "worthily receive those holy mysteries, may obtain remission of their sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion; may be filled with God's grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with Christ, that he may dwell in them, and they in him."

Q. It will be proper to explain the form of service for the holy communion, appointed by the Church. What is meant by "the offertory," which the minister is directed to begin after the sermon, when the communion is to be administered?

A. After the sermon, when there is a communion, the minister returns to the Lord's table, and reads several sentences from Scripture, which explain and urge the duty of charity. This part of the service, from being used while the people are offering their alms by oblations, is called *the offertory.*

Q. By whom, and for what purpose, are the bread and wine placed upon the table?

A. The bread and wine are then placed upon the table by the priest, as a solemn acknowledgment of God's sovereignty over the creatures. To this offering of the bread and wine to God the term *oblation* refers, in the prayer for Christ's Church militant, which follows the offertory. The bread and wine are here offered simply as such; they are afterwards offered as consecrated symbols of the body and blood of Christ.

Q. What follows next in the service?

A. The alms for the poor, the devotions or gifts which used formerly to be made for the clergy, and the oblations of the bread and wine, being now presented unto God, are placed before him on his holy table, the Church then proceeds to the duty of intercession, in a solemn and affecting prayer for Christ's Church militant.

Q. What is the design of the exhortations that are to be used on the Sunday before the communion?

A. The exhortations to be used when notice is given of the communion, are designed to set forth the necessary preparation for this holy sacrament, and the great danger and *guilt of refusing* to participate of it. The primitive Church

did not need these exhortations; for then the communion was administered whenever public worship was celebrated, and all the faithful partook of it.

Q. What is the design of the exhortation appointed to be used at the administration of the communion?

A. The exhortation used at the administration of the communion, in animating and affecting language, sets forth and enforces the dispositions with which we ought to approach the Lord's table.

Q. What follows the exhortation?

A. After the exhortation, the priest invites the people to draw near: accordingly, it would appear proper for all the communicants to come from the more remote parts of the church, as near as possible to the Lord's table; and that they may come with lively faith in the merits of Christ, he calls upon them previously to confess their sins; which is accordingly done in words the most solemn and pathetic. The priest then, in a form of absolution, authoritatively declares the forgiveness of sins—thus conveying peace and consolation to the humble and contrite: and still further to strengthen the hopes of the penitent, he recites some sentences from Scripture, which, in the most lively manner, exhibit the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, to all who truly turn to him.

Q. What do you remark concerning the lauds and anthems?

A. The communicants having exercised their charity, having humbly confessed their sins, and received the comforting declaration of God's mercy in the absolution, they are now prepared for the solemn duty of thanksgiving, the more appropriate design of the Lord's supper, which was anciently called the *holy Eucharist.* Elevated, as it were, above the world, they seem prepared to enter into the heaven of heavens, there to join with angels and glorified saints, in adoring and praising the everlasting Jehovah. Accordingly, after the priest and people, in short sentences, mutually excite one another to the duty of praise, the priest, in the name of the people, makes a solemn acknowledgment to God, of their obligation to thank and praise him: and then both priest and people break forth in an animating act of thanksgiving, used in the most ancient liturgies; which, from the epithet *holy* being thrice repeated, as addressed to the three persons of the Trinity, is called *The Trisagium,* or *thrice holy.** On certain festivals there are proper prefaces

* Τρισαγιον.

appointed, in which thanks are returned to God for the particular mercy of redemption that day commemorated. These prefaces are to be repeated seven days; in imitation, probably, of the Jewish feasts, which continued, some for seven, and one for eight days.[z]

Q. What follows the lauds and anthems?

A. The nearer we approach these holy mysteries, the greater reverence we ought to express: the priest accordingly allays the foregoing exultations, by an act of humiliation highly expressive and affecting, taken from the most ancient liturgies.

Q. Explain the prayer of consecration.

A. The prayer of consecration is the most ancient and essential part of the whole communion. This prayer, as it now stands in the office of communion prescribed by our Church, is agreeable to the primitive model, and to the prayer of consecration in the first liturgy of king Edward VI. which was afterwards materially altered. The priest first returns solemn thanks to God for the sacrifice of the death of Christ, the solemn memorial of which is now to be celebrated. He then solemnly consecrates the bread and wine to be symbols of the body and blood of Christ, repeating the words of Christ at the institution of them. They are then offered to God, as a solemn memorial of the passion and death, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, whereby our redemption is effected. The blessing of God, through his word and Holy Spirit, is then invoked on the consecrated elements, that they may be to every worthy receiver, in power and efficacy, the body and blood of Christ. And in conclusion, the faithful, as a just return to God for the inestimable blessings of redemption, devote themselves, their souls and bodies, to his service; humbly imploring his mercy and grace. This prayer of consecration, formed on the model of the prayer of consecration in the primitive Church, is venerable for its antiquity; it presents the most just and impressive views of the efficacy and importance of the holy Eucharist, and it is calculated to awaken the most solemn and tender affections of the soul.*

Q. What follows after the consecration?

A. After the mercy and goodness of God are celebrated

z Levit. xxiii.

* The prayer of consecration, in the communion office of the Protestant Episcopal *Church* in America, more nearly resembles the primitive model, than the prayer of *consecration used by* the Church of England.

in a hymn, the minister proceeds to administer the consecrated elements to the communicants, who devoutly kneel at the chancel. The Church of Rome administers the bread alone to the laity; but such a partial sacrament, unauthorized by Scripture, was unknown for a thousand years after Christ.

Q. What is the conclusion of the service?

A. When the communicants have received these solemn pledges of the mercy of God, they are considered as restored to his favour, and then address him in the Lord's Prayer, as their reconciled Father. The prayer which follows, is a solemn and devout acknowledgment of the goodness of God in this holy sacrament, and a humble supplication of his grace, to preserve his people in their fellowship with him, through Jesus Christ. After which, the faithful proceed to praise God, in the exulting and animating strains of the *Gloria in excelsis;* and they are then dismissed by the bishop or priest, with the solemn form of benediction. An office for the communion, more solemn, appropriate, sublime, and affecting, could not be devised.

Q. Whence arises the obligation of Christians to participate, at every opportunity, of the holy communion?

A. Christians are called to participate of the holy communion by the command of their blessed Lord, to whom they are bound by the dearest ties of gratitude. This holy ordinance is the instituted mean by which they are to derive from the Redeemer, the consoling and strengthening succours of his grace and mercy. It is admirably calculated to excite and cherish every holy disposition in the soul. To abstain from it, discovers the highest folly, and the most criminal insensibility to the exalted displays of divine love. It should, therefore, be the business of every Christian to partake of this divine ordinance, at every opportunity, with that sincere penitence and faith, love and devotion to God, which will ensure to him the inestimable blessings it is designed to convey.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GOOD-FRIDAY.

A FAST.

Q. WHAT *fast doth the Church this day celebrate?*

A. The Church celebrates on Good-Friday, the fast which commemorates the sufferings and death of Christ.

Q. Why is this day called Good-*Friday?*

A. This day is called *Good*-Friday, from the exalted good which we derive from the sufferings of Christ; who, "by the shedding of his own blood, obtained eternal redemption for us."

Q. Has not this day been observed as a day of fasting and humiliation, from the earliest ages of the Church?

A. This day, sacred to the commemoration of our Saviour's sufferings, has been observed, from the very first age of Christianity,* as a day of the strictest fasting and humiliation. The grief and affliction which Christians on this day express, arise from a sense of the evil and guilt of their sins, which drew upon their blessed Redeemer the painful and shameful death of the cross.

Q. In what manner should we now observe this day?

A. On this day, all the pursuits of business should be suspended, the service of the Church devoutly attended, and the intervals of public worship devoted to holy meditation on the sufferings of Christ, and to other pious exercises. By abstinence, self-denial, and humiliation, we should seek to testify our sympathy in the sufferings of our Lord, and our lively sorrow for our sins, which occasioned his sufferings. There can be no greater evidence of insensibility and ingratitude, than to spend the day sacred to the sufferings of Christ, in the usual pursuits of business or pleasure. Those who profess to observe the day, and yet refuse to suspend on it their usual business, display the greatest inconsistency of conduct, and are guilty of a flagrant contempt of the authority of the Church. Openly avowing that they will make no sacrifices or worldly interest to testify their gratitude to that divine Saviour who shed for them his blood, surely, when

* [redacted] 4. c. 17.

they appear at his tribunal, they can lay no claim to the exercise of his mercy.

Q. What have you to remark concerning the psalms and lessons for the day?

A. The psalms for the day[b] were composed by David, in times of the greatest calamity and distress, and do all mystically refer to the sufferings and death of Christ; the 22d psalm, particularly, was, in several passages, literally fulfilled in the sufferings of Christ. The first lesson for the morning (Gen. xxii.) contains, in the history of the intended sacrifice of Isaac, a striking type of the perfect oblation made this day by the Son of God, and a lively illustration of the infinite love of God in the redemption. The second lesson for the morning (John xviii.) recounts some of the circumstances which attended the betraying of Christ by Judas, and his trial before the bar of Pilate. The first lesson for the evening (Isaiah lii. ver. 13. and chap. liii.) contains a striking and affecting prophecy of the passion of Christ, and of the benefits which the Church thereby receives; and the second lesson (Philip. ii.) contains an affecting exhortation to the virtues of humility and unity, from the example of Christ, in humbling himself for us to the death upon the cross.

Q. What do you observe concerning the collects, epistle, and gospel for the day?

A. The collects for the day, implore the mercy and blessing of God upon the Church which the Son of God redeemed, and humbly beseech him to bring all mankind into this spiritual fold. The epistle proves, from the insufficiency of the Jewish sacrifices, that they only typified a more sufficient one, which the Son of God did as on this day offer up, and, by one oblation of himself then made upon the cross, complete all the other sacrifices, which were only shadows of this, and make full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. The gospel for this day is very properly taken out of St. John, because he was the only one who was present at the passion, and stood by the cross while others fled: the passion is thus represented to us by one who saw it, and from whose example we may learn not to be ashamed or afraid of the cross of Christ.

Q. Who was it that this day suffered?

A. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, begotten of his Father before all the worlds, as the promised Messiah, took

[b] *Morning, Ps.* 22. 40, 54 *Evening Ps.* 34 98

our nature upon him, and in that nature this day suffered for our salvation.

Q. What are the predictions which lead us to believe that the promised Messiah was to suffer?

A. The prophet Isaiah represents the Messiah who was to come, as "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, oppressed and afflicted, wounded and bruised, brought to the slaughter, and cut off from the land of the living."[c] The prophet Zechariah foretels the price for which he was to be betrayed—"thirty pieces of silver,"[d] and declares, in reference to the Messiah, that "they should look on him whom they pierced."[e] The holy psalmist, speaking of the Messiah, says, that "they should pierce his hands and his feet."[f] These predictions agree with the history of the sufferings of Christ, as recorded by the evangelists. The Saviour constantly instructed his apostles in this truth, both before his death, that they might expect it, and after his death, that they might be confirmed by it:[g] and St. Paul makes it part of his preaching, that "Christ must needs have suffered."[h]

Q. How were the sufferings and sacrifice of Christ typified under the law?

A. The paschal lamb, slain at the celebration of the passover, was a type of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. The brazen serpent set up in the wilderness, was a type of the Son of man lifted up upon the cross. All the sacrifices for sin proclaimed, that, "without shedding of blood, there was no remission." But the most eminent type of the sacrifice of Christ, was the annual sin-offering made for the whole nation of the Jews, on the great day of atonement and expiation. The high priest, on this day, made a solemn atonement for the sins of the people. Two kids of the goats were presented before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle: one of these was offered, and with the blood the high priest entered by himself into the holy of holies, and sprinkled the mercy-seat; on the head of the other he laid both his hands, and confessing over him the sins of the people, sent him away into the wilderness. The apostle,' in allusion to this ceremony, represents Christ to have been our High Priest, and on his passion-day to have offered the sacrifice of himself, to have borne our sins in his own body,

c Isa. liii. d Zech. xi. 12. e Zech xii. 10.
f Psal. xxii. 16. g Mark ix. 12 Luke xxiv. 26, 46. h Acts xvii. 3.
i Heb. ii. 17. ix. 24, 25, 26.

and with his own blood to have entered into the holy place not made with hands, and to have appeared as before the mercy-seat in the presence of God for us

Q. What did our Saviour suffer?

A. When the blessed Jesus took upon him human nature, he became subject to all the frailties, and infirmities, and sufferings of mortality. His whole life, from his birth in the stable to his death upon the cross, was a life of suffering; particularly in his last bitter passion, he suffered most exquisite pains and tortures in his body, and unutterable fears, and sorrows, and anguish in his soul.

Q. Was not the death of Christ in the highest degree ignominious and painful?

A. After the Saviour had been buffeted, scourged, spit upon, and mocked by the people and their rulers, he suffered the painful and ignominious death of the cross. Crucifixion was a Roman punishment, and considered as the most ignominious and painful: it was painful, because those parts of the body which are most sensible of pain were pierced with nails, and the death was lingering; and the punishment of crucifixion was ignominious, because it was inflicted only upon the vilest criminals.

Q. How does it appear that our Saviour suffered in his mind?

A. In the garden of Gethsemane his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; and he prayed thrice with vehemence, that the cup might pass from him. The agony of his soul forced a passage through the innumerable pores of his body, and he sweat drops of blood. Suffering on the cross the holy indignation of God against the sins of man which he sustained, he broke out in the bitter exclamation, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

Q. What was the cause of the anguish and agony which the Saviour suffered?

A. God laid on his Son Jesus Christ the iniquities of mankind. The Saviour, possessed of perfect knowledge, fully understood the infinite evil and guilt of the sins of men which he sustained: he was inflamed with the most ardent desire to maintain the authority of God, which he knew these sins violated: he considered that the fallen race of man, whom he tenderly loved, lay under the wrath of God, on account of these sins: the infinite purity of his nature must have inspired him with the deepest abhorrence of all iniquity. If we consider all these circumstances, we shall

not wonder at his anguish and agony. For if the view of the guilt of his own sins alone, which he but imperfectly conceives, fills the sinner with bitter sorrow and remorse; no bounds can be set to the grief of the Saviour, no measures to his anguish, which proceeded from a full apprehension of the transgressions of so many millions of sinners. The Lord laid on him the iniquities of all mankind.

Q. Why was it necessary that Christ should thus suffer?

A. Christ suffered, that he might teach us to expect suffering, and to afford us an example of patience and resignation: he suffered, that he might assure us of his sympathy and compassion for us under all our afflictions: he suffered, that he might admit us to a share in those everlasting glories which were the reward of his sufferings. The principal object of his sufferings was to redeem us from sin and everlasting death, by making an atonement for our sins: for remission of sin being impossible, by the inscrutable decree of God, without effusion of blood, our redemption could not be wrought but by the blood of the Redeemer: the sufferings and death of Christ, being of infinite value and efficacy, expiated the guilt of our transgressions. The blood of Christ is called the *blood of the covenant*,[j] because God, in consideration of the sufferings and death of Christ, was pleased to establish a covenant of grace and mercy, wherein he promises and engages to forgive the sins of all those who truly repent and believe.

Q. How do you prove from Scripture, that Christ, by his sufferings and death, made an atonement for our sins?

A. Christ himself declares, "that he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;"[k] that "his blood is shed for many, for the remission of sins."[l] He represents himself as "the good shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep."[m] St. Paul expressly declares, that "Christ died for the ungodly;"[n] that "he died for our sins, according to the Scriptures;"[o] that "he tasted death for every man."[p] The ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews treats at large of the doctrine, that Christ "appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself." St. Peter says, "that we are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ;"[q] and St. John declares, that Christ "is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours

[j] Heb. x. 29. [k] Matt. xx. 28. [l] Matt. xxvi. 28.
[m] John x. 11. [n] Rom. v. 6. [o] 1 Cor. xv. 3.
[p] Heb. ii. 9. [q] 1 Pet. i. 18.

only, but for the sins of the whole world."[r] That Christ made, by his sufferings and death, an atonement for sin, is a doctrine which lies at the foundation of the Christian system, and affords the most lively display of the infinite love of God, and the most animating motives to trust in his mercy.

Q. How do you vindicate the doctrine of vicarious satisfaction, or the substitution of an innocent person to suffer for the guilty?

A. The scheme of vicarious satisfaction is not unjust; because the Saviour was infinitely willing to suffer in the place of man; and God, who was offended, was willing to accept the satisfaction of the substitute. The scheme is not unreasonable; because a greater good was obtained, by affording sinful man, through the satisfaction of Christ, an opportunity of obtaining everlasting happiness, than could have been obtained, by inflicting on man, personally, the punishment of his transgressions: and by the suffering of Christ in the place of man, the authority of God, and the dignity of his government, are maintained, and a glorious display afforded of all the divine perfections.

Q. Did Christ suffer in his divine nature?

A. The divine nature is of infinite and eternal happiness, and therefore incapable of suffering. Our blessed Saviour suffered, therefore, only in his human nature. But since there was a mysterious, but intimate conjunction of both the divine and human natures in his person, the attributes, properties, actions, and passions of the one may, with propriety be attributed to the other; and therefore, as Christ was the Son of God, as well as the Son of man, it may be said that his sufferings were the sufferings of God the Son.

Q. What instruction should we derive from the commemoration of the sufferings of Christ?

A. Since it was necessary that the Son of God should take upon him our nature, and suffer and die to atone for our sins, we should learn the infinite evil and guilt of sin, and should be excited sincerely and deeply to confess our unworthiness, and renounce our sins. The sufferings of Christ should impress us with a lively sense of his infinite love towards us, and excite us gratefully and zealously to serve him. The enjoyments of this life cannot be so valuable, nor its calamities so considerable, as we are apt to suppose, since the blessed Saviour himself was destitute of

[r] 1 John ii. 2.

the common comforts and conveniences of life, and shared so largely in its afflictions and sufferings. Prosperity, therefore, is not a certain sign of God's favour, nor affliction an evidence of his displeasure. We should bear with patience and resignation the evils of this life, which we deserve to suffer, since our innocent Redeemer sustained infinitely greater sufferings on our account. The sufferings of Christ too should animate us with the joyful confidence, that we have an almighty Intercessor and Guide, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and who will, therefore, be always as ready as he is able to support and succour us under all our trials. The contemplation of the sufferings of the Son of God for us, who were his enemies, is one of the most powerful means of subduing in our hearts the emotions of malice and revenge, and of cherishing the sentiments of benevolence and charity.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOLY SATURDAY, *or* EASTER EVEN.

A FAST.

Q. WHAT *is the fast of this day designed to commemorate?*

A. The fast of Easter Even is designed to commemorate the state in which our Saviour was between his death and his resurrection; for, "after he died for us, he was buried, and went down into hell."

Q. In what sense is the descent of Christ into hell to be understood?

A. There would be no impropriety in supposing that, in the interval between his death and resurrection, Christ went in the place of condemned spirits, to proclaim, in the kingdom or residence of the great adversary and destroyer of men, the glorious triumphs of his cross.* But Christ's de-

* Though the Church, by reciting, in the epistle for this day, the passage which is commonly applied (doubtless improperly) to prove Christ's descent into the *place of torment*, may be thought to favour this opinion; yet, from the rubric before the Apostles' Creed, it appears that she considers Christ's descent into *hell* as meant of *his descent into the place of departed spirits.*

scent into hell is, with more propriety, thought to mean his descent into the place where the souls of the faithful rest in hope till the resurrection. The word *hell* is expressed in the original by two words,* one of which is used to denote the place of torment, and the other the place of departed spirits; and in this latter signification it is supposed to be used in the Creed.

Q. What proof have you from Scripture, of the existence of a place where the souls of the departed rest till the resurrection?

A. The Scriptures represent the rewards of heaven, and the punishments of hell, as adjudged to the righteous and the wicked at the general judgment after the resurrection. As, therefore, it is contrary to reason and Scripture to suppose that, after death, the soul is for any time in a state of insensibility, the souls of the righteous and the wicked must remain till the general judgment, in a state distinct from the proper heaven of happiness and hell of torments; the souls of the righteous, in the joyful expectation of the consummation of their bliss, both in body and soul, in the heavenly kingdom of their Saviour; and the souls of the wicked, in the fearful anticipation of being doomed to that hell of torments, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.†

Q. What provision has the Church made for our devotion on this day?

A. The Church, on this day, directs us to private acts of meditation and abstinence; and calls us, in her public service, to a consideration of the glorious consequences of our Saviour's death, burial, and resurrection, which are set forth in the lessons, epistle, and gospel for the day.

Q. In what manner was our Saviour buried?

A. According to what was predicted concerning the Messiah,[z] Christ "made his grave with the rich." Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, and a disciple of Jesus, begged his body from Pilate; and having wrapped it in a linen cloth, put it into his own new tomb; which the Jews rendered secure, by shutting it up with a stone, sealing the stone, and setting a

* Γέεννα and ᾅδης.

† For a more full explanation of Christ's descent into hell, the reader is referred to an excellent Sermon of Bishop Seabury; and the author, in an *appendix* to an *Address at the Funeral of the Right Rev. Bishop Moore*, has endeavoured to give a complete view of the doctrine of the *descent into hell*.

[z] Isa. liii. 9.

watch.' These circumstances tend to establish the reality of our Saviour's death, as well as the certainty of his resurrection, by refuting the story of the Jews, that the body of the Saviour was stolen from the sepulchre.

Q. Since we must all pass through the gate of death, to a state of never-ending happiness or misery, ought it not to be our principal concern to prepare for death?

A. It should be our supreme concern to prepare for death, that we may avoid the everlasting torments, and secure the eternal joys of that unchanging state of existence on which we then enter. The prospect of death must excite terror in all but those faithful servants of God, who can view it as the gate to a joyful resurrection, to never-ending glory and felicity.

Q. What is our only security against the fears of death?

A. The constant exercise of piety and virtue can alone authorize us to place that reliance on the mercy and grace of the Redeemer, which will be our only security against the fears of death. He who has made his peace with God by sincere repentance and faith, and through divine grace endeavours to "keep a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man," may look forward to the approach of death, not only with composure, but with lively hope.

Q. Is not repentance a necessary preparation for death?

A. In order to make our death safe and happy, we must reconcile ourselves to God by a sincere and hearty repentance. "The sting of death is sin;" and a soul loaded with guilt is not only incapable of the happiness of heaven, but is excluded from it by the absolute decree of God. To the work of repentance, therefore, we should immediately apply, lest sickness and death overtake us before we have made our peace with God. For though the approach of death may be a proper season to renew our repentance, it is the most unfit time to begin it; and there can be but little hope that it will then be sincere and effectual.

Q. Is not a degree of indifference to worldly enjoyments, as well as moderation in the pursuit of them, necessary to prepare us for a safe and happy death?

A. To wean our affections from the world is necessary to prepare us to meet death with composure and with hope. Our sorrow and concern at parting with the things of the world, will be in proportion to the love and esteem wherewith we

t Matt. xxvii. 57, &c.

have cherished them; and to be separated from objects on which we have fixed our hearts, must be attended with great pain and uneasiness. We should, therefore, accustom ourselves to resign freely to God those worldly objects from which death will inevitably snatch us, and gently to loose the ties which bind us to the world, that we may have less pain when they are entirely broken. We should habitually endeavour to moderate our desires for the enjoyments of this world; and suppressing all ambitious and covetous desires, and retrenching at times our innocent pleasures, we should hold ourselves in readiness to part with what we love most; and committing all our concerns to the disposal of God, we should bear without murmuring, all the losses and afflictions that assail us. In this manner we may be said, in the language of the apostle, "to die daily;"* since we shall feel daily less fondness for life, less desire for its glories, less eagerness for its emoluments, less concern for its highest pleasures. Death will thus find us prepared to leave the world, and to enter on the joys of our eternal rest.

Q. Is not circumspection in spending our time also a necessary preparation for death?

A. Time is the invaluable talent entrusted to us by God, on the right use of which will depend our eternal destiny. To abuse it, or squander it away in dissipation, in idleness, or sensual indulgences, will be to prepare for ourselves misery and anguish at the hour of death, when we come to review our past lives. By diligence and faithfulness in the discharge of the duties of our respective stations, and by making our everlasting salvation the supreme concern of life, we shall so employ the time allotted us, that, at the hour of death, we may be able to look back upon it with humble satisfaction and pleasure.

Q. Is not the proper regulation and settlement of our worldly affairs also a necessary preparation for death?

A. The prudent and proper regulation and settlement of our worldly affairs should be attended to while we enjoy health and spirits for the work. The disposal of our estate requires time and consideration, so as to distribute it justly among our own families, friends, and dependents, and to appropriate a proper proportion of it to pious and charitable purposes. This important business, therefore, should not be left to our last moments, when the mind is disordered, and

* 1 Cor. xv. 31.

the body harassed by pain and sickness. The Church accordingly, in her office for the visitation of the sick, directs that "men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates while they are in health."

Q. What will give us particular comfort upon a death-bed?

A. Works of mercy and charity, performed in the name of Christ, are the best proofs of the sincerity of our love to him, and will be the standard by which our future rewards will be determined: they, therefore, will afford us the most exalted consolation on a death-bed, inspiring us with confidence in the mercy of that Saviour, who hath promised to reward every act of beneficence done from love to him, as done unto himself.

Q. What are those holy dispositions with which we should bear the attacks of sickness?

A. We should bear the attacks of sickness with patience and resignation, with firm trust and dependence upon God, with thankfulness for his mercies. We should also, as far as possible, exercise devotion on a sick-bed, imploring the grace of God to succour and console us.

Q. Wherein consists the exercise of patienve upon a sick-bed?

A. The exercise of patience on a sick-bed, consists in carefully restraining all murmuring or discontent on account of our sickness; in watching against all temptations to anger, arising from the mistakes of our attendants, the unreasonable kindness of our friends, the disagreeableness of our medicines, and the preparation of our food; and in curbing all anxious fears and unreasonable solicitude.

Q. Wherein consists the exercise of resignation on a sick-bed?

A. The exercise of resignation on a sick-bed, consists in resting fully assured, that what God chooses for us is much better than what we could choose for ourselves; in considering our sickness and our pains as correctives of our past follies, and as proper aids to our growth in grace; and in being willing to refer the continuance and event of our sickness to the good pleasure of God, who, as he first placed us in the world, is the fittest judge when we should go out of it.

Q. Wherein consists the exercise of trust in God on a sick-bed?

A. The exercise of trust in God upon a sick-bed consists in allaying the apprehension of future evil, by the consideration that we are in the hands of an infinitely good and gracious God, who will lay no more upon us than we are able to bear; and who will, in his good time, either remove what afflicts us, or give us grace to improve it to our spiritual welfare and happiness. Trust in God during sickness, should also allay our anxiety concerning our families; for, should we be taken from them, we leave them under the protection of the providence of God, whose blessing is the richest portion, and without which the best human provision is no security for prosperity or happiness.

Q. How should we exercise thankfulness on a sick-bed?

A. A thankful disposition will lead us to acknowledge that we suffer less than we deserve, and that our sufferings are the merciful visitations of God, who designs by them to awaken and cherish our spiritual graces and virtues: it will lead us to acknowledge the goodness of God, in all the particular comforts and attentions which we may enjoy in our sickness.

Q. What are the exercises of devotion proper for a sick-bed?

A. When visited with sickness, we should endeavour to maintain a pious and devout frame of mind; sending up secret ejaculations to God, adoring his goodness, imploring his blessing on the means used for our recovery, and humbly beseeching him to inspire us with submission, and to strengthen and console us by the secret but powerful influences of his mercy and grace. Above all, we should seek the assistance of a minister of the Church, to offer up our prayers, and to administer to us the most comfortable sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; that, enlivened and strengthened by this divine *Viaticum*, we may be supported under all the pains of sickness, and joyfully pass, when God calls us, through the dark valley of the shadow of death.

Q. Wherein consists the happiness of the death of the righteous?

A. The happiness of the death of the righteous does not consist in their exemption from pain and sorrow, which assail them as well as the wicked. Lazarus, for whom was prepared a retreat in Abraham's bosom, ended his life in extreme poverty and wretchedness; while the rich man, whose luxury had kindled for him inextinguishable flames, dies in the midst of every worldly convenience and comfort. Blessed

martyrs expired in flames, and upon the rack; while their cruel persecutors often died a natural and common death. The happiness of a good man in death, therefore, must arise from a well-grounded expectation of a blessed immortality, through the merits of that Saviour whom he has sincerely, though imperfectly, served. This exalted hope makes him willing to leave the world, in which he has sojourned as a stranger and a foreigner, and with joy to look forward to that eternal home on which he is entering.

Q. What method should we take during the time of health, to prepare ourselves for the pious exercises proper at the approach of death?

A. During the time of health, we should set apart some stated seasons for the exercise of those pious dispositions which will be more particularly necessary and proper at the approach of death. Our minds being thus stored with devout and holy thoughts, we shall be able, at the approach of death, to engage in those pious and holy exercises, which will prove an effectual consolation and support at this awful period.

CHAPTER XXV.

EASTER SUNDAY.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT event does the Church this day commemorate?

A. The Church this day commemorates the glorious event of our Saviour's resurrection. This festival, for antiquity and excellence, takes the precedence of all other festivals. It was observed from the very first ages; the only dispute being, not about the propriety of the festival itself, but about the proper day on which it was to be observed. The observation of Easter was at length fixed to one and the same day, by the great general Council of Nice.*

Q. What provision has the Church made for celebrating this day with proper solemnity and devotion?

A. The Church, supposing us eager to celebrate the joyful event of the Saviour's resurrection, begins her office of

* A. D. 325.

praise, as soon as the absolution is pronounced, with anthems proper to the day; exciting her members to call upon one another "to keep the feast; for that Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, and is also risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." The psalms, the lessons, the collect, epistle, and gospel, are all appropriate to the day.

Q. What have you to observe concerning the psalms for the morning service?

A. The psalms for the morning service, are the 2d, 57th, and 111th. The 2d psalm was composed by David, on his triumphant settlement in his kingdom, after the opposition made by his enemies; and is a prophetical representation of the inauguration of the Messiah, in his regal and sacerdotal office, after he had been persecuted and crucified. The 57th psalm was drawn up on occasion of David's delivery from the hands of Saul; and, in a mystical sense, celebrates Christ's triumph over death and the grave. The 111th psalm is a thanksgiving for the marvellous works of redemption, of which the resurrection of Christ is the chief.

Q. What have you to observe concerning the psalms for the evening service?

A. The psalms for the evening service, are the 113th, 114th, 118th. The first was designed to set forth the admirable providence of God, which was never more discernible than in the great work of our redemption. The second is a thanksgiving for the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt; an event typical of our deliverance from death and hell. The last was composed when David was in the undisturbed possession of his kingdom, after the ark was brought to Jerusalem; but it was secondarily intended to prefigure our Saviour's resurrection, to which it is applied both by St. Matthew and St. Luke.[v]

Q. What have you to observe concerning the lessons, epistle, and gospel for the day?

A. The first lessons for the morning and evening service, contain an account of the passover, and the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt; the one prefiguring Christ, who is our passover; the other, our deliverance from the dominion of death and hell. The gospel, and the second lesson for the evening, give us full evidence of Christ's resurrection; and the epistle, and second lesson for the morning, teach us what use we should make of it.

[v] Matt. xxi. 42; Acts iv. 11

Q. How do you prove the fact of the Saviour's resurrection?

A. The resurrection of Christ was attested by a sufficient number of witnesses; these witnesses were competent judges of the fact; their character and situation rendered them worthy of credit; they maintained their testimony to this fact, with the sacrifice of worldly interest, through suffering, persecution, and, finally, death itself; and they proved the reality of the resurrection of Christ, by the supernatural and miraculous powers which they exercised in attestation of it, and by which they established the religion of Jesus throughout the world.

Q. Prove that the resurrection of Christ was attested by a sufficient number of witnesses.

A. The fact of the Saviour's resurrection, clearly and forcibly predicted by the prophecies and types of the Old Testament, was attested by a sufficient number of witnesses. Christ, after his resurrection, appeared to his disciples at various times and places; he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; and afterwards, from the midst of his apostles, he was taken up into heaven.[w]

Q. Prove that the witnesses of Christ's resurrection were proper judges of the fact.

A. The witnesses of Christ's resurrection had been his chosen companions; they were intimately acquainted with him, and therefore could not be deceived in regard to his person, when he appeared to them again. So far were they from being predisposed to believe in the doctrine of the resurrection of their Master, that they, in the first instance, repeatedly discovered the greatest incredulity in regard to it. This incredulity certainly gives the greatest weight to their testimony; for it excited suspicion; it led to examination; it could not be vanquished, but by repeated, strong, and irresistible proofs.

Q. Do not the character and situation of the apostles render them worthy of credit?

A. It is in the highest degree improbable, that simple, ignorant fishermen, would forge the strange, unnatural story, of their Master's resurrection: it is in the highest degree improbable, that these despised refuse of the people would conceive the bold and hazardous plan of attacking the religion of their forefathers, and the religion of the whole world,

[w] *Matt. xxviii. 9: Luke xxiv. 31, 34: John xxi. 2: xx. 19, 26: Acts. i. 3, 9.*

by forging the story, that their Master, who had been crucified as a malefactor, had risen from the dead. His body, which was guarded in the sepulchre by his implacable enemies, would have been produced, and confounded their plans. They were ignorant and despised, incapable of contriving this forgery, destitute of the means of supporting it; and the simplicity, sincerity, modesty, and candour which are apparent in their writings, are wholly inconsistent with the character of impostors.

Q. Did not the apostles maintain their testimony with the sacrifice of worldly interest, through suffering, persecution, and even death itself?

A. The apostles maintained their testimony to the resurrection of Christ, with the sacrifice of worldly interest, through suffering, persecution, and even death itself. Fanatics and enthusiasts have encountered the most severe sufferings in defence of the errors of a heated imagination; but there never was an instance of men encountering persecution and death in defence of any fact which they knew to be false, and which they could have no interest in maintaining. It is absolutely contrary to reason and common sense to suppose, that the timid and doubting apostles would have asserted the fact of their Master's resurrection when they knew it to be false, and would have maintained their testimony through suffering, persecution, and even death itself; when, by renouncing the false assertion, they would have secured wealth, prosperity, and honour.

Q. Did not the apostles seal their testimony to the truth of the resurrection, by the exercise of miraculous powers?

A. The apostles, as witnesses of the resurrection, sealed their testimony by the exercise of miraculous powers, by which they established the Gospel throughout the earth, in opposition to the pride, the prejudices, and the passions of mankind. The unanimous voice of history attests the fact, that, in the short space of thirty years, the apostles had converted all the world to the belief of the fact, that Jesus, who, had been crucified, had risen from the dead; and it is certainly absolutely impossible that the disciples, simple, ignorant, despised fishermen, without learning, power, or respect, could have thus established, by the mere force of ingenuity and cunning, a Gospel that combated the inveterate prejudices of the Jews, the pride and vain learning of philosophers, the *idolatry*, *superstition*, and lust of the heathen

world. Sensual pleasures and conquest were the means by which the famous impostor of the East established his religion; but the humiliating, holy, and self-denying religion of Jesus, could have been raised triumphant on the ruins of the kingdom of sin and Satan, only by the arm and power of the Most High.

Q. Why did not Christ show himself openly, after his resurrection, to all the people?

A. The resurrection of Christ is attested in such a manner as should satisfy any reasonable and unprejudiced person. If it is conceived necessary that he should have shown himself to the whole city of Jerusalem, for the same reason it might be fancied necessary that he should have appeared to the whole Jewish nation, and to the whole world in all succeeding ages. It was the design of God to afford such evidences of the resurrection as would be sufficient to satisfy every sincere and unbiassed mind; and it could not be expected that he would gratify the unreasonable demands of those who wilfully resisted evidence, clear and satisfactory to every impartial inquirer.

Q. What were the effects of Christ's resurrection with respect to our Lord himself?

A. By his resurrection, Christ was effectually, and in a most convincing manner, declared to be the Son of God.[x] The blessed Jesus had always claimed this divine character; and his resurrection from the dead, by the mighty power of God, confirmed these pretensions. By his resurrection he was also declared to be the Judge of quick and dead.[y]

Q. What are the effects of Christ's resurrection in respect to ourselves?

A. The resurrection of Christ was, on the part of God, a public declaration, that he had accepted the atonement which the Saviour made, and was ready to forgive the sins of those who repent. "Thus Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification."[z] The resurrection of Christ also powerfully sets forth, and enforces the duty of our rising from the death of sin unto a life of righteousness. "Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."[a] Lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a pledge and assurance of the immortality of the soul, and of the resurrection of the bodies of men. "God hath begotten us again *unto a lively* hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the

x Rom. i. 4. y Acts x. 40, 42 z Rom. iv. 25. a Rom. vi. 4.

dead."[b] "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."[c]

Q. Does not reason render probable the immortality of the soul?

A. Though reason cannot establish the certainty of the immortality of the soul, it furnishes us with many arguments that render this immortality probable. Thought and reflection, the power of choosing and refusing, are attributes which are wholly repugnant to matter; and therefore must be ascribed to some spiritual principle, not subject, like matter, to decay and corruption. Mankind have, in all ages and nations, cherished the belief of the soul's immortality; and this universal consent is a proof that this doctrine is entirely agreeable to the natural dictates of our minds, and must be derived from the Author of nature. God is a being of infinite goodness, and it is contrary to his goodness to suppose, that he has created the soul of man with powers and desires which render him capable of immortality, and which eagerly aspire after it, and yet has confined the existence of the soul only to the present life. The justice of God can only be vindicated by a future state of rewards and punishments, in which the unequal dispensations of the present life will be done away, and the righteous and the wicked rewarded and punished according to their respective deserts. The hopes of the righteous, and the apprehensions of the wicked, can only be accounted for on the supposition, that there is an immortal state after death, to which, by the constitution of human nature, the hopes and fears of mankind are directed. But though these arguments lead to the probability of a future state, it is the Gospel alone which has "brought life and immortality to light," and established the immortality of the soul on the authority of an express revelation from God.

Q. What evidence did the ancient patriarchs and Jews possess of a future state?

A. The account which Moses gave of the soul of man, that it was of divine original, and made after the image of God, would lead to the belief of its immortality. The patriarchs, it appears, all lived as "strangers and sojourners upon earth, looking for a city which hath foundations, whose

[b] 1 Peter i 3. [c] Rom. viii. 11.

builder and maker is God." The whole economy of the Jewish worship was typical of greater and better things; "the law having a shadow of good things to come."[d]

Q. What assurance does the Gospel afford of the immortality of the soul?

A. The immortality of the soul lies at the foundation of the Christian revelation: "Life and immortality are brought to light through the Gospel."[e] "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."[f] God will "reward every man according to his works."[g] The "wicked shall go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal."[h]

Q. What effect should the belief of the immortality of the soul have upon us?

A. The belief of a future state, in which everlasting happiness or everlasting misery will be our destiny, should make us prefer the interest of our souls before all the advantages of the present life; and should make us ready and willing to part with every thing most dear to us in this world, to secure our eternal welfare. "For what will it profit a man, if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" It should excite us earnestly and diligently to seek to establish in our souls those holy graces and virtues, which only can prepare us for immortal happiness; and carefully to avoid all sin, which is destructive both to our future hopes and to our present quiet. The belief of an immortal life should wean us from the love of this world, which cannot satisfy the desires of our immortal souls; and should support us under all the afflictions of life, which are designed to "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Especially, it should comfort us at the approach of death; because we know that "our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel."

Q. What are we to believe concerning the resurrection of the body?

A. We are to believe, that as it is appointed unto all men once to die, so it is also determined that all men shall rise from death; that their bodies, committed to the grave, and dissolved into dust, shall, at the last day, be restored, and be reunited to their souls; that the same bodies which lived

d Heb. x. 1. *e* 2 Tim. i. 10. *f* John iii. 16.
g Matt. xvi. 27. *h* Matt. xxv. 46.

before, shall be revived; that this resurrection shall be universal—the just to enjoy everlasting life, and the wicked to be condemned to everlasting punishment.

Q. What argument serves to prove that the resurrection of the body is not impossible?

A. The resurrection of the body is not impossible; for with God, who is infinite in knowledge and in power, "nothing is impossible." When there was no man, God made him of the earth; and, therefore, when he returns to earth, the same God can make him man again.

Q. Does not reason lead us to consider the resurrection of the body as highly probable?

A. It is highly reasonable to suppose, that as the body has been partaker with the soul in her good or bad actions, so it will be raised, to share with her the rewards or punishments of a future life. The body would not have been formed to be the companion of the soul only for the short period of the present life. Nature also bears testimony to a resurrection. The day which had sunk into darkness, rises again from the dead of night; the summer springs forth from the grave of winter; and every seed cast into the earth, corrupts, and then revives and multiplies. The deductions of reason, therefore, render highly probable the resurrection of the body; but the certainty of this doctrine can only be deduced from divine revelation.

Q. Is the doctrine of the resurrection of the body revealed in the Old Testament?

A. The declaration of Job—"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God," &c.:[i] the assurance in the prophet Isaiah, (chap. xxvi. 19.) "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise; the earth shall cast out the dead;" and the assurance in the prophet Daniel, "that many of them who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt;"[j] evidently refer to a resurrection of the dead. The declaration of God to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,"[k] is considered by our Saviour as a proof that God would not permit his servants to remain for ever under the dominion of death, but would raise them to life again; for "God is

i Job xix. 25, 26. *j* Dan. xii. 2. *k* Exod. iii. 6.

not the God of the dead, but of the living.'[l] The Old Testament also affords us examples of a resurrection, in the child of the widow of Zarephath raised from the dead by Elijah;[m] in the child of the Shunammite raised from the dead by Elisha;[n] and in the dead man who, when cast into the sepulchre of Elisha, was restored to life.[o]

Q. Is not the resurrection of the body expressly revealed in the Gospel?

A. Our Saviour expressly declares, that "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."[p] We are told in the book of Revelation, that "the sea shall give up the dead that are in it, and death and the grave deliver up the dead that are in them, in order to be judged, every man according to his works."[q] St. Paul, in his defence before Felix, openly professes his belief "in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."[r] The same apostle tells the Philippians, that "the Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body."[s] The instances of those whom Christ raised from the dead,[t] serve to confirm our belief in this doctrine; and the resurrection of Christ himself is a lively pledge and assurance of our own resurrection. "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."[u]

Q. Will the same body which died be raised again?

A. That the same body which died shall be raised again, appears from the similitude which the apostle uses in the 15th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where his reasoning is to the following effect: that as out of a grain of corn sown in the earth, there springs an ear of the same kind; so from a mortal and corruptible body buried in the ground, there shall be raised an immortal and incorruptible one. The parts of one body may indeed be so scattered, and perhaps incorporated among the parts of another body, that it may not be possible for every particular body to arise with just the same parts of which it consisted at the time of its dissolution; neither is there any necessity in nature or Scripture that it should do so. How far, therefore,

l Matt. xxii. 32. *m* 1 Kings xvii. 22. *n* 2 Kings iv.
o 2 Kings xiii. 21. *p* John v. 28, &c. *q* Rev. xx. 13.
r Acts xxiv. 15. *s* Philip. iii. 21.
t Mark v. 42; Luke vii. 15; John xi. 44. *u* 1 Cor. xv 20.

each body shall consist of the same matter, or what change of parts may be admitted, is a vain, empty, and needless speculation. It is sufficient for us to know, that, by the almighty power of God, the same body which sunk into the grave, and passed into corruption, shall be raised immortal and incorruptible.

Q. Will not the bodies of the righteous be raised with very great alterations?

A. A great and glorious change will be wrought at the resurrection, in the bodies of the righteous. For thus the apostle argues concerning the resurrection of the body: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."[v]

Q. Explain the change wrought in the body, which the apostle denotes by the expression, "it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption."

A. The body which has now in it such manifest principles of mortality and corruption, liable to pains, diseases, and to death, shall, at the resurrection, be perfectly refined and purified; shall spring up an incorruptible and immortal substance, which shall be fitted to endure as long as the soul to which it is united, even to all eternity—"It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption."

Q. Explain the change in the body at the resurrection, denoted by the expression, "it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory."

A. That body which, at death, seems so base and abject, so vile and contemptible, shall, at the resurrection, be transformed into a bright, and beautiful, and glorious body, "fashioned like unto the glorious body" of our blessed Redeemed and Head, by whose mighty power this change shall be wrought. How glorious this body of the Saviour is to which our bodies shall be fashioned, may, in some measure, be gathered from the history of his transfiguration, when his face is said "to have shined like the sun, and his raiment to have become shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth could white them;"[w] and from the description of his appearance to St. John—"His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass,

[v] 1 Cor. xv. 42, &c. [w] Matt. xvii. 2; and Mark ix. 3.

as if they burned in a furnace."[x]—"It is sown in dishonour it is raised in glory."

Q. Explain the change in the body at the resurrection, denoted by the expression, "it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power."

A. That body, which is now so weak and feeble, so subject to diseases and indispositions; so slow, heavy, and inactive, that it clogs the soul, and retards its spiritual flights and operations; shall then become so strong and powerful, so active and vigorous, as even to assist the most spiritual motions of the soul, to become every way a fit organ and instrument of its most exalted operations; and in this perfect strength, health, and vigour, it shall continue for ever.—"It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power."

Q. Explain the change which will take place in the body at the resurrection, denoted by the expression, "it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

A. That body, which is now fitted only for this animal life, which needs perpetually to be repaired by suitable nourishment of meats and drinks, to be sustained and kept in order with labour and exercise, to be refreshed with pleasures suitable to this animal life, but far beneath the excellent nature of the soul, shall, at the resurrection, become of a more refined and spiritual nature: shall be wholly delivered from all those wants and incumbrances which are now inseparable from animal life; and shall be freed from all appetites for such pleasures as are now the snares and temptations of the soul—"It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

Q. Since the resurrection at the last day is universal, extending both "to the just and the unjust," what bodies will the wicked have at the resurrection?

A. The bodies of the wicked shall be immortal, that they may be fitted for eternal punishment, for that state of torment "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Q. What influence should the belief of the resurrection of the body have upon us?

A. The belief of the resurrection of the body should lead us to magnify the wisdom and power of God, exhibited in raising to life a body which had been consigned to corruption: and also his mercy and justice, displayed in the state

[x] Rev. i. 14, 19.

of glory to which he exalts the righteous, and of misery and torment to which he condemns the wicked. The belief of the resurrection of the body should lead us to adore that almighty Saviour, who hath "abolished death;" through whose mercy and grace alone we shall be able to break the bars of death, and pass the gates of hell; and in the triumphs of victory to exclaim, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This doctrine should console us under the fears of death, and under our sorrow for the death of others; for, assured of a life which shall never have an end, and that the body which crumbles into dust shall be again quickened, we shall be able to consider death as only a passage to a state of mortal perfection and glory. It should support us also under all those miseries and infirmities to which our bodies are subject in this life; since, after the resurrection, they shall be no more liable to pain, or diseases, or to dissolution; for "death will be swallowed up in victory." Above all, the belief of this doctrine should lead us to preserve pure our bodies, which are designed for so glorious a destiny; to "abound in the work of the Lord," and to "keep our consciences void of offence towards God, and towards man;" that so we may be partakers of a resurrection to immortality and glory.

Q. Since Christ, by his resurrection from the dead, hath assured unto Christians an immortal inheritance, should we not constantly set our affections upon things above?

A. Christ, by his resurrection from the dead, hath assured to Christians an immortal inheritance. As then we are "risen with him," we should "set our affections on things above." We should regulate all our actions from a regard to the next life, and make it our great business to please God: "For our fruit must be unto holiness, or the end will not be everlasting life." We should never place the perishing enjoyments of the present life in comparison with the exalted joys of our heavenly inheritance; to secure which, we should be ready to part with whatever is most dear to us. We should be zealous and industrious in doing all the good in our power, "since our labour will not be in vain in the Lord;" and we should bear all the miseries and calamities of life without murmuring or despondency; for the "light afflictions of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed." We should frequently meditate upon spiritual subjects, and maintain holy communion with God by prayer, and by the

ordinances of public worship, particularly by receiving frequently the holy eucharist. We shall then be prepared for the fruition of the blissful presence of God; and shall be able to view the approach of death, not only without fear, but with composure and satisfaction.

CHAPTER XXVI.

EASTER MONDAY *and* EASTER TUESDAY.

FESTIVALS.

Q. WHAT *is the design of the Church in these days?*

A. The design of the Church in these days, is to confirm our faith in the doctrine of the resurrection.

Q. Explain the lessons for Easter Monday?

A. The first lesson for Monday morning, contains the history of God's sending to the Israelites manna, or bread from heaven; which was a type of our blessed Saviour, who was the bread of life that came down from heaven. The first lesson for Monday evening, is the chapter of Job which contains the remarkable declaration of his faith in a resurrection. The second lesson for the morning contains an historical account of the resurrection of Christ; and the second lesson for the evening recites the remarkable cure which Peter wrought by the name of Jesus on the lame man—a proof that Christ was indeed risen from the dead, and vested with almighty power.

Q. Explain the lessons for Easter Tuesday.

A. The first lessons for Tuesday morning and evening celebrate the goodness and power of God, in that everlasting redemption which was assured to us by the resurrection of Christ; and the second lessons relate also to the subject of the resurrection.

Q. Explain the epistles and gospels for the day.

A. The epistles and gospels all set forth and establish the resurrection of Christ.*

* The substance of the two chapters in the original work of Nelson, on Easter Monday and Easter Tuesday, is, in the present work, incorporated with the foregoing chapter on Easter Day.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of the SUNDAYS *after* EASTER.

Q. WHAT *have you to observe concerning the Sundays after Easter?*

A. The Sundays after Easter all relate to the resurrection of Christ, and the promise of the Comforter. Accordingly, these glorious causes of joy and exultation are the principal subjects of all the gospels from Easter to Whitsuntide. The epistles exhort us to seek diligently those holy graces and virtues which alone can entitle us to the glorious rewards which Christ, by his resurrection, hath assured to all his faithful servants. On the first Sunday after Easter, being the octave of Easter, there used to be a repetition of part of the service of Easter-day; and hence this Sunday, being celebrated in like manner as that feast, but in a lower degree, obtained the name of *Low Sunday.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST, April 25.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *account have we of the evangelist St. Mark, whose festival the Church this day commemorates?*

A. St. Mark, though a Roman by name, was born of Jewish parents, originally descended of the tribe of Levi. He was converted by some of the apostles, probably by St. Peter, whose companion he was in all his travels, supplying the place of an amanuensis or interpreter. For Christian assemblies in those days being made up of men of different nations, when the apostles addressed them in the language of the nation to which the greater number of the assembly belonged, it was necessary that some person should interpret what was said to those who were of a different nation. This was the office of St. Mark, in his attendance upon St. Peter.

Q. What is the object of the epistle and gospel for this day?

A. The epistle and gospel inculcate the necessity of our firm adherence to that Saviour, whose life and doctrines are recorded by this evangelist and others.

Q. What do you mean by an evangelist, *the title bestowed upon St. Mark?*

A. The title *evangelist* was at first given to all those who preached the gospel: but it was afterwards confined to those four who wrote the history of the life of Christ; which history is styled the *Gospel*, or *good tidings*;* the plan of salvation promulgated through Jesus Christ, being the source of everlasting life and bliss.

Q. Where was St. Mark sent to plant Christianity?

A. St. Mark was sent by St. Peter into Egypt, to Alexandria, and the parts adjacent, where his ministry was eminently successful. He afterwards went westwards to Lybia, and other countries; the barbarous and idolatrous inhabitants of which he converted to the Christian faith, by his preaching and miracles. On his return to Alexandria, he organized the Church, by constituting its officers and governors.

Q. How did St. Mark suffer martyrdom?

A. While he was celebrating divine worship at the festival of Easter, he was seized by the people, who were enraged at his opposition to their base idolatry, and dragged through the streets on the ground to prison, where, in the night, his soul was animated and encouraged by a divine vision. The rage of the people being still unsatisfied, early the next morning they came again, and so tore off his flesh. by dragging him about on the ground, that he expired in their arms.

Q. What account do you give of the gospel written by St. Mark?

A. St. Mark wrote his gospel at the request of his converts at Rome.[y] It is generally looked upon as a supplement to St. Matthew's gospel, as it gives a more particular account than St. Matthew does of some events of our Saviour's life.

Q. What may we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. The principal instruction which we may receive from this festival, is that to which the Church directs us in the collect for the day; that we should diligently seek to esta-

* Εὐαγγέλιον.

y Euseb. lib. ii. c. 15.

blish our faith in the truth of that holy Gospel which the evangelist St. Mark was, with others, an instrument in promulgating. We should, therefore, diligently read and study those divine writings which contain the words of eternal life.

Q. How does it appear that it is the duty of all Christians to read the Scriptures?

A. The sacred Scriptures explain the conditions of salvation, without the knowledge and practice of which we can never attain happiness. The articles of our faith proposed in Scripture, and the precepts for the direction of our lives, necessarily affect all the members of the Christian Church; and, therefore, the holy Scriptures ought to be read and studied by all people. The apostles, in their epistles, address Christians in general; which is a proof that their writings were designed for general use. The Bereans are commended for searching the Scriptures,[z] and Timothy praised for "having known them from a child."[a]

Q. What was the practice of the Jews and primitive Christians in regard to reading the Scriptures?

A. Among the Jews, the law was read and expounded every Sabbath day in their synagogues; and it is made the character of a good man among them, to meditate upon it day and night.[b] The primitive fathers press the reading of the Scriptures upon the people, as a duty of indispensable obligation; as the best preservative against heretical opinions, as well as a bad life. In order that the Bible might be generally read, it was early translated into all languages. Those who, in times of persecution, delivered up the sacred records of their faith, were styled *traditors;* which circumstance is a proof that the Bible was in general use and circulation among the people.

Q. But are not people in general apt to misapply and pervert the Scriptures?

A. The best things may be abused; and though, in St. Peter's time, some persons wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction, he no where forbids the reading of them. The prohibition of them would give rise to much greater evils than the general use of them can possibly produce.

Q. How does it appear that the Scriptures are the word of God?

A. The writers of the books of Scripture lay claim to

z Acts xvii. 11. a 2 Tim. iii. 15 b Psal. i. 2

divine inspiration,[c] and established their claim by the exercise of miraculous powers, which proved that they were not impostors. These miraculous powers procured at first the reception of their writings, which have been handed down as books divinely inspired, by the concurring testimony of every age.

Q. Wherein consist the perfection and perspicuity of the sacred Scriptures?

A. The sacred Scriptures contain all truths necessary for salvation; and these truths are delivered with such plainness and perspicuity, that all persons may discover and understand them, who will bring to the study of the sacred volume, a humble and teachable disposition; and who, in dependence upon divine grace, will diligently and faithfully exercise the powers of reason, and use the lights which the Creeds of the universal Church afford.

Q. With what dispositions of mind ought we to read the Scriptures?

A. We should read the Scriptures with reverence, with humility, and modesty; for they are the oracles of the infinitely wise and glorious God, and we are weak and imperfect creatures. We should read them also with earnest prayers for divine illumination, and with an honest and pious disposition of mind, free from prepossession and prejudice, from vanity and self-confidence; for "he that doeth the will of God, shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God."[d]

Q. State some of the principal rules to be observed in the interpretation of Scripture.

A. In the interpretation of Scripture, we should endeavour to explain difficult passages by those that are more clear. We should carefully attend to the peculiar phraseology of Scripture,* and acquaint ourselves with those ancient usages and customs to which many parts of Scripture allude. We should be careful not to wrest any part of Scripture to support our favourite preconceived opinions; and in interpreting it, we should take as our guide, those

c Rom. x. 14. Col. i. 25. 1 Pet. i. 12, &c. &c. *d* John vii. 17.

* Things spiritual are, with great force and beauty, in Scripture, illustrated and explained by comparisons drawn from the objects of nature, from positive institutions, from the customs of society, from personal characters and actions, and from historical events: and the nature of this figurative style, and the rules for interpreting it, are judiciously and elegantly explained by the Rev. William Jones, of Nayland, in his work *on the figurative language of Scripture.*

creeds and confessions of faith which have been received in the Church, at all times, in all places, and by all persons, and which thus possess antiquity, universality, and general consent. Of this description are the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.*

CHAPTER XXIX.

ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *account do you give of the Apostle St. Philip?*

A. St. Philip the apostle was a native of Bethsaida, a town bordering upon the sea of Tiberius; from which obscure and contemptible place our Saviour chose his disciples, in order to confound the wisdom and power of this world. He had the honour of being first called to be a disciple of our blessed Saviour, and was his constant companion and follower. He brought Nathanael, a person of great note and eminence, to the knowledge of the Messiah;[e] and to him the Gentile proselytes made their application to see the Saviour of the world.[f] With him our Lord had that discourse concerning himself before the last paschal supper,[g]

* The rule—*Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus, credendum est*, is certainly the safest and best rule in the interpretation of Scripture. That error may, for a season, pervade the Church, cannot be denied; but to suppose that those doctrines in which the great body of Christians have in all ages been agreed, may yet be erroneous, is to admit that it is impossible to ascertain the true sense of Scripture Had *antiquity* been sacredly adhered to, we should never have heard of the doctrines of transubstantiation, purgatory, supremacy of the Pope, and other corruptions of the Church of Rome, in which she has departed from the primitive faith and usage; nor, among Protestants, of the doctrines of absolute election, irresistible grace, &c. which were wholly unknown for the four first centuries after Christ. Had *primitive universal* usage been followed, we should never have witnessed the rejection, by any set of Christians, of the Episcopal Order; which has been handed down from the apostolic age, and by which the priesthood is transmitted from the divine Head of the Church. Much sound and useful truth may be derived from the Commonitory of Vincentius Lirinensis, in which the above rule for interpreting Scripture is stated, explained, and defended; and from the excellent notes of its learned and orthodox translator, the Rev. William Reeves, who has published this tract in the same volumes with his translation of the Apologies of Justin, Tertullian, &c.

e John i. 45. *f* John xii. 21. *g* John xiv. 8, 9.

wherein our Saviour gently rebukes him for the small improvement he had made, after having so long attended to his instructions.

Q. Where did this apostle preach the gospel?

A. It is thought he preached the Gospel in Upper Asia, where, by his preaching and miracles, he made many converts.

Q. Where did he suffer martyrdom?

A. He suffered martyrdom at the city of Hierapolis; where the magistrates, enraged at his success in preaching the Gospel, put him in prison, and afterwards caused him to be scourged and crucified.

Q. What is the design of the epistle and gospel for the day?

A. The epistle, taken from St. James, exhorts to patience under afflictions and trials, which assailed, with the greatest severity, the apostles and primitive disciples; and the gospel records the conversation of our Saviour with St. Philip at the last supper.

Q. What account do you give of the apostle St. James?

A. St. James the Less was probably the son of Joseph by a former wife, and therefore styled the *brother of our Lord*, in the same sense that our Lord was reputed the son of Joseph. It is thought he was styled *the Less*, from the stature of his body, to distinguish him from St. James, who was of greater height and bulk, and therefore called *the Great*. But he acquired a more exalted appellation by the piety and virtue of his life, being styled, on this account, *St. James the Just*. He was chosen Bishop of Jerusalem, the mother of all other Churches; and was particularly active at the council of the Church at Jerusalem, in the great controversy concerning the obligation of the Jewish rites and ceremonies; for though the case was opened by St. Peter, and discussed by St. Paul, yet the final decree was pronounced by St. James;[h] from which circumstance appear the fallacy of the papal claims for the supremacy of St. Peter.

Q. How did St. James suffer martyrdom?

A. The Scribes and Pharisees, enraged against him for his success in preaching the Gospel, cast him down from a pinnacle of the temple, on the feast of the passover, when he was addressing the people.[i] Being very much bruised,

[h] Acts xv. 7, 12, 18, 19. [i] Hegesip. lib. ii. c. 2.

though not killed by the fall, he recovered so much strength as to get upon his knees, and implore the divine mercy for his barbarous persecutors: and while he was thus praying for them, they loaded him with a shower of stones, and at length beat out his brains.

Q. What was the character of St. James?

A. St. James was a man of exemplary piety and devotion. Prayer was his constant business and delight. He governed the Church with zeal and fidelity. He was distinguished for the meekness and humility of his temper, and for his temperance and self-denial.

Q. What writings of St. James remain?

A. His epistle, addressed to the Jewish converts dispersed and scattered abroad, in which he endeavours to strengthen their faith and patience, and to encourage them to perseverance under the trials that assailed them, is the only one of his writings which remain.

Q. What instruction does this festival afford us?

A. From the readiness with which St. Philip obeyed our Saviour's call to follow him, we should learn readily to obey the secret calls of God's holy Spirit, and to receive the divine truths of the Gospel. The zeal and resolution of these apostles in promulgating the truth, should animate our exertions in the cause of religion and virtue. The example of St. James, in praying for his murderers, inculcates on us the duty of forgiving our enemies; and his remarkable self-denial should impress on us the importance of this duty.

Q. Explain the duty of self-denial.

A. The duty of self-denial consists in mortifying and restraining our appetites and passions; in being willing to give up all earthly comforts, and to endure the greatest hardships, sooner than do any thing contrary to the commands of God; choosing, like Moses, rather "to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

Q. What are the precepts of our Saviour in regard to this duty of self-denial?

A. "He that loveth father and mother more than me," says our Saviour, "is not worthy of me."[j] "If any man cometh after me, and hateth not wife and children, brethren and sisters, he cannot be my disciple."[k] "If he forsaketh

[j] Matt. x. 37. [k] Luke xiv. 26.

not all that he hath, and hateth not his own life, and doth not bear his cross, he cannot be my disciple."[l]

Q. What is the meaning of these precepts?

A. These precepts teach us, that no consideration of pleasure, or fear of pain, should allure or intimidate us from our allegiance to our divine Redeemer; that even the commands of our parents, to whom we are bound by the strong ties of affection and reverence, should not be obeyed, when they contradict the commands of God, whose authority is paramount to all others; and, therefore, affection for the nearest friend of our bosom, and tenderness to our own offspring, will not justify the transgression of the laws of God, who claims our supreme love and obedience. These precepts imply, that we should relinquish our worldly subsistence sooner than violate the dictates of conscience, and thus forfeit our eternal inheritance; that we should even part with life itself, sooner than disobey that God, who, as he has prepared for his faithful servants immortal rewards, is able also "to destroy both soul and body in hell;" and that, finally though in the service of our Master we should be assailed by the severest afflictions and persecutions, we should patiently sustain them all, sooner than renounce him who, for our sakes, endured the shame and agony of the cross, and who, if we deny him before men, will deny us before his Father who is in heaven.

Q. Is it not necessary that we should sometimes restrain the indulgence of even our innocent appetites?

A. If we gratify our appetites in all things where we lawfully may indulge them, they will, at length, obtain such power and dominion over us, that we shall find it very difficult to oppose them at all. In order, therefore, to prevent our appetites from gaining too great an ascendency over us, and in order to preserve our command over them, we should sometimes deny them even in those indulgences that are innocent and lawful.

Q. Is not self-denial a reasonable duty?

A. God has promised to assist and support us in the mortification of our sinful passions; and has also assured us, that whatever temporal sacrifices we may make for his sake, we shall be rewarded "a hundred fold." It must certainly, therefore, appear reasonable and proper, to deny ourselves in things of small moment, in order to obtain

[l] Luke xiv. 27, 33.

everlasting rewards God, as our Creator, Benefactor, and Redeemer, has a supreme claim to our service; and no consideration should ever come in competition with our duty to him, who "hath given us richly all things to enjoy," and hath "redeemed us by the precious blood of his own Son." In the practice of self-denial, we are animated by the example of the blessed Jesus, whose whole life was a course of pain and suffering.

CHAPTER XXX.

ROGATION DAYS.

FASTS.

Q. WHEN *does the Church observe the fast of the Rogation Days?*

A. The Rogation Days are the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Holy Thursday, or the Ascension of our Lord.

Q. What was the origin of these days?

A. About the middle of the fifth century, Mamericus, Bishop of Vienne, upon the prospect of some dreadful calamities that threatened his diocess, appointed that extraordinary supplications, accompanied with fastings, should be offered up to God, on the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before the festival of the Ascension. *Rogations* being the Latin name given to these supplications, the days on which they were offered were called *Rogation* days; and the observance of them soon became general in the Church.

Q. What is the design of the Church in observing these days?

A. The design of the Church in enjoining these days to be observed, is not only to prepare us to celebrate, with proper devotion, our Saviour's ascension; but also to appease God's wrath, that so he may be pleased to avert the judgments which our sins have deserved; and that he may vouchsafe to bless the fruits with which the earth is at this time covered. Christians should therefore observe these days as days of extraordinary humiliation and devotion.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The ASCENSION *of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *event does the Church this day commemorate?*

A. The Church this day commemorates our blessed Saviour's ascension into heaven, and his sitting at the right hand of God. The commemoration of Christ's ascension at the expiration of forty days after the resurrection, has always been observed as a festival in the Church.

Q. Explain the psalms appointed for the morning service.

A. The psalms for the morning service are the 8th, 15th, and 21st. The 8th psalm, which is employed in magnifying God for his wonderful creation of the world, and for his goodness to mankind, may be prophetically applied to the greatest of all mercies, that of exalting our human nature, by the Son of God's assuming our flesh, and ascending with it to heaven.[m] The 15th psalm represents the Saviour, the only person who possessed the perfection of righteousness displayed in the psalm, as ascending "the holy hill," the highest heavens, of which mount Zion was a type; and the character of this our great High Priest must belong derivatively to his followers, who must follow his steps below, if they would reign with him above. In the 21st psalm, which was plainly fulfilled in the Saviour's ascension, the Church celebrates the glory and stability of his kingdom, on whose "head" was set "a crown of pure gold," and to whom was given "long life, even for ever;" his triumphant victory over his "enemies," who were all "put to flight;" and his glorious "exultation in his own strength" as God, who was abased in much weakness as man.

Q. Explain the psalms for the evening service.

A. The psalms for the evening service are the 24th, 47th, and 103d. The 24th psalm was written on occasion of the moving of the ark to the place prepared for it on mount Zion, and is supposed to have been sung as the solemn procession ascended the hill; it is prophetically applied to the establishment of the Christian Church, and to Christ's ascension into heaven. The 47th psalm alludes to the ascent of the ark, which we spiritually apply to the ascent of our Lord;

[m] Heb. ii. 6, &c.

and the Church is excited to rejoice, and to sing praise, because "God is gone up with a merry noise, and the Lord with the sound of the trump." The 103d psalm is an animating act of thanksgiving to God for his mercy and love to mankind; the greatest display of which was this day afforded in the exaltation of our human nature to his right hand, and in his merciful acceptance of the intercession of his Son Jesus, who this day went to heaven, to plead the merits of his blood in our behalf.

Q. Explain the lessons for the day.

A. The first lesson for the morning service (2 Kings ii.) contains the history of the taking up of Elijah into heaven, and his conferring a double portion of his spirit on Elisha; which may prefigure our Saviour's ascension, and the sending down of the fulness of his Spirit on the apostles and disciples. The second lesson for the morning (Luke xxiv. ver. 44.) records our Saviour's last conversation with his disciples on earth, and describes the manner in which he was separated from them and taken up into heaven. The first lesson for the evening (Deut. x.) records the ascent of Moses into the mount, to receive the law from God, in order to deliver it to the Jews; which event was a type of our Saviour's ascension into heaven, to send down the law of faith, the perfection and consummation of the old law. The second lesson for the evening (Eph. iv. to ver. 17.) is obviously and peculiarly appropriate to the day, displaying the exalted and glorious design of Christ's ascent into heaven, which was the establishment and perfection of his Church.

Q. Explain the epistle and gospel for the day.

A. The epistle (Acts i. 1.) after taking notice of the ascension of Christ, teaches us, that we are not to "stand gazing up into heaven," astonished and confounded at the miraculous ascent of our Lord; but so to prepare ourselves, that we may with joy behold him, who "shall come in like manner as he went into heaven." The gospel, (Mark xvi. 14.) like the second lesson at morning prayer, relates our Lord's last discourse to his disciples, and his reception into heaven. Thus, in the first lessons we have the type, and in the epistle, the gospel, and second lessons, the antitype of the ascension.

Q. What are we to believe concerning our Saviour's ascension?

A. We are to believe, that the only begotten and eternal

Son of God, after he rose from the dead, did, with the same soul and body with which he rose, by a true and local translation, convey himself from the earth in which he lived, into the heaven of heavens, the most glorious presence of the majesty of God.

Q. Was not the ascension of Christ typically represented under the law?

A. The high priest was appointed once every year to enter into the holy of holies; by which ceremony it was denoted, that "the High Priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, was to enter into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us;"[n] for all the Jews believed that the tabernacle did signify this world, and the holy of holies the highest heavens. Wherefore, as the high priest did pass through the tabernacle, and with the blood of the sacrifice enter into the holy of holies; so was the Messiah to offer up himself a sacrifice, to pass through all the courts of this world, and, with his blood, to enter into the highest heavens, the most glorious seat of the majesty of God. The ascension of Christ was also prefigured by the translation of Elijah into heaven.

Q. Was not the ascension of the Messiah prophetically declared?

A. The ascension of Christ was declared prophetically by the psalmist: "Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men."[o] The phrase *on high*, in the language of David, signifying *heaven*, could properly be applied to no other conqueror but the Messiah, who was to conquer sin, and death, and hell, and triumphing over them, to ascend into the highest heaven, and thence to send the precious and glorious gift of the Spirit unto the sons of men. The ascension of Christ was also prophetically declared in those psalms that are appointed for the day, as has been already shown.

Q. When did our Saviour ascend into heaven?

A. The Saviour ascended into heaven forty days after his resurrection. While he was blessing his disciples, he was taken up in a cloud, they all steadfastly looking at him till he was entirely gone out of sight.

Q. What testimony did the angels bear at his ascension?

A. While the apostles were looking after our Saviour,

[n] Heb. ix. 11, 12. [o] Psal. lxviii. 18.

two angels appeared to them, assuring them, that as Jesus was taken from them into heaven, so he should, in as glorious a manner, return again to judge the world.

Q. Why was the ascension of Christ visibly performed in the presence of the apostles?

A. It was not necessary that the apostles should see the resurrection of Christ, because his showing himself to them after he was alive, was a sufficient proof of his resurrection. But since the session of Christ in heaven was not to be visible to them on earth, it was necessary that they should witness the act of his ascension, that they might bear their testimony to it.

Q. What is meant by Christ's sitting at the right hand of God?

A. By Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, is meant the advancement of his human nature to the height of dignity and authority in the presence of God. The right hand denotes the place of greatest honour and favour; and the expression *sitting*, denotes fulness of possession and perpetuity of glory.

Q. What were the ends and effects of Christ's ascension into heaven, and exaltation at God's right hand?

A. Christ ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, that he might there exercise his *prophetical* office, and impart to us his holy Spirit, for our instruction, assistance, and comfort;[p] that he might there exercise his *priestly* office, presenting his meritorious blood before God, and interceding with him in our behalf;[q] and, finally, that he might there exercise his *kingly* office, govern, protect, and deliver us, and at length exalt us to heaven where he has prepared a place for us.[r]

Q. Since Christ hath ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, is not profound adoration due to him?

A. Since Christ has ascended into heaven, and is advanced to glory and power at the right hand of God, we should render him the honour and worship, the fear and reverence, the service and obedience that are suitable to his state; joining with "every creature in heaven, in earth, and under the earth," in sending up acclamations of blessing and praise to him, to whom "all power is given in heaven and in earth."

[p] Acts ii. 33. John xvi. 7. [q] Heb. iv. 14. ix. 24.
[r] Heb. x. 12, 13 John xiv. 2. xvii. 24.

Q. Should not the ascension of Christ and his session in glory tend to cherish our faith and hope?

A. We cannot certainly distrust the accomplishment of any promises declared by him, who is ascended into heaven, and who sitteth at the right hand of divine wisdom and divine power, there ordering all things for the advantage of those who love and serve him. "Jesus, our forerunner, having entered within the vail,"[s] we can cherish the blessed hope of a joyful and happy rest, after the troubles and sorrows of this wretched life; for "where he is, there we shall be also."[t]

Q. Should not the ascension of Christ and his exaltation to glory, excite our joy, and animate us with confidence in our prayers to God?

A. We have cause for joy that our Redeemer, who laid down his life for us, and was "obedient unto the death of the cross," has obtained a glorious victory over all his enemies, and is exalted to almighty power and dominion: we have cause for joy that we have so merciful and kind an Intercessor, always ready to do us good offices at the throne of grace; to which, therefore, we should come with boldness, that "we may receive mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Q. Should not the ascension and exaltation of Christ animate us in our obedience?

A. It should animate us to zealous and holy obedience, to reflect that our Lord is exalted to everlasting glory and dignity; and that God hath designed the same rewards for us, if we tread in the footsteps of the Saviour, "running the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

Q. Should not the consideration of the ascension and exaltation of Christ elevate our affections above the world?

A Since Christ, our divine forerunner and head, hath ascended into the heavens, we should also seek the things that are above. To our divine Head we should evermore be joined, deriving life, strength, and activity from him: where our divine Master is, there should our minds be, constantly attentive to his pleasure, and ready to serve him: where the city is, whose denizens we are, and where our final rest must be, there our thoughts and affections should be placed; by its laws and principles should our conduct be

[s] Heb. vi 19, 20. [t] John xiv. 3

regulated. Though "absent from our Lord in the body, we should be present with him in our spirit;" contemplating him with an eye of faith, fixing our love upon him, reposing our confidence in him, and directing to him our prayers and praises; that being thus raised above the world, its vain delights, its sordid interests, its empty glories, we may be prepared for the perfect fruition of the glorious and blissful presence of our God and Saviour.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of the SUNDAY *after* ASCENSION DAY.

Q. EXPLAIN *the lessons for the day.*

A. The first lesson for the morning service (Joel ii.) contains the prediction of the descent of the Holy Spirit, the actual completion of which prediction the Church, on this day, looks forward to commemorate on the ensuing Sunday. The second lesson (John xvii.) is part of the animating prayer of Christ for his disciples, that they might be sanctified and preserved in unity by that Spirit of truth which was to descend upon them. The first lesson for the evening service (Zeph. iii.) is principally occupied in celebrating the salvation which was to be conferred upon the Church, the spiritual Zion; which salvation was completed, when Christ, ascending into heaven, became the "King of" his spiritual "Israel;" and sent that Holy Ghost, through whose mighty power his people are to be gathered and redeemed from their captivity to sin and Satan, and made "a praise throughout the earth." The second lesson for the evening (2 Thess. iii. to ver. 17.) directs us to pray, that the "word of God may have free course, and be glorified;" which we may be assured will take place, through the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, whose coming we are soon to commemorate; and also exhorts us "patiently to wait for the coming" of that blessed Saviour who has ascended into heaven; and "not to be weary in well-doing," since we have the prospect of a glorious reward in heaven.

Q. Explain the collect, epistle, and gospel for the day.

A. The collect prays for the descent of "the Holy Ghost to comfort and to exalt us to heaven, whither our Saviour

Christ hath gone before." The epistle exhorts us to make a good use of the gifts of the Holy Ghost; and the gospel contains the promise of this blessed Comforter.

Q. What has the week after the ascension been sometimes called?

A. During this week, the apostles and disciples continued in the lively expectation of the Comforter, and in earnest prayer for him; on which account this week has been styled the *week of expectation.*

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHITSUNDAY.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *event does the Church this day commemorate?*

A. The Church, in the festival of this day, commemorates the gift of the Holy Ghost, who this day visibly descended upon the apostles.[u]

Q. Does not this festival correspond to the feast of Pentecost among the Jews?

A. The feast of Pentecost* among the Jews, instituted in memory of the delivery of the law on mount Sinai, became afterwards distinguished by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the apostles, enabling them to promulgate that spiritual law, which was the perfection and consummation of the law delivered on mount Sinai. This festival, therefore, corresponds to the feast of Pentecost among the Jews; and it has been observed from the very first ag— of Christianity.†

Q. Why was this festival styled Whitsunday?

A. This festival was, perhaps, styled metaphorically *Whitsunday*, that is *White-Sunday*, from the diffusion of light which on this day fell on the apostles, and enabled them to become "lights to lighten the world;" or it was so called, from its being one of the two principal seasons of baptism,

[u] Acts ii. 2.

* So called from being the *fiftieth* day after the Passover, πεντηκοστὴ ἡμερα.

† Just Mar. Tertullian, Origen, bear testimony to its observance.

when all who were baptized wore white garments, in token of the spiritual purity which baptism designated, and the innocence of life to which they then bound themselves.

Q. Why were Easter and Whitsuntide fixed upon as stated seasons of baptism?

A. Easter was appointed as a season for the administration of baptism, in memory of Christ's death and resurrection; corresponding to which are the two parts of the Christian life represented in baptism, dying unto sin, and rising again to newness of life: and Whitsuntide was appointed for this purpose, in memory of the baptism of the apostles with "the Holy Ghost and with fire,"[v] and of their having at that time baptized themselves three thousand souls.[w]

Q. Were infants baptized only at these stated times?

A. Infants and sick persons received baptism at all times;[x] the baptism of adults alone was deferred to these stated periods.

Q. Why were adults baptized only at these stated periods?

A. These stated times were appointed for the baptism of adult converts, in order that they might be prepared by catechetical instruction, and by the examination of the bishop or presbyter, for receiving this holy sacrament; for which also they prepared themselves by prayer and fasting in the season of Lent.

Q. Explain the psalms appointed for the morning service.

A. The psalms for the morning service, are the 48th and 68th. The 48th psalm, under images taken from the earthly Jerusalem, celebrates God's mercy to his spiritual Zion, the Church; which mercy was powerfully displayed this day in the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Church, and the conversion of three thousand souls who were added to the Church.[y] The 68th psalm, under the emblem of the removal of the ark to mount Zion, describes Christ's ascension and exaltation, with their blessed consequences, his "giving gifts to men;"[z] and also describes the conversion of the nations, and the collection and preservation of the Church, by "the company of preachers," who were this day invested with the supernatural powers which enabled them to accomplish this mighty work.

Q. Explain the psalms appointed for the evening service.

A. The psalms for the evening service are the 104th and

v Matt. iii. 11.
w Acts ii. 41.
x Tertullian de Bap. Orig. in Lev. c. 12. Cyr. Epist. ad Fid.
y Acts ii. 41.
z Eph. iv. 8.

145th. The 104th psalm, which celebrates the wisdom and power of God in the creation and preservation of the world, is appointed for this day, because many of its expressions refer to the powerful operations of the Holy Ghost, who made "the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind." "The earth," at first, "trembled at the look of him;" but it was afterwards "renewed by his breath, and filled with the fruits of his works." The 145th is an eucharistic psalm, celebrating the goodness of God, and "the glory of that kingdom" which was this day established in the world by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Q. Explain the lessons, epistle, and gospel for the day.

A. The first lesson for the morning (Deut xvi. to ver. 18.) records the appointment of the Jewish Pentecost, which was a type of the Christian Pentecost; for as the law was at this time given to the Jews from mount Sinai, so also was the new evangelical law this day promulgated by the administration of the Holy Ghost. The first lesson for the evening (Isaiah xi.) contains a striking prophecy of the establishment of Christ's kingdom, and the conversion of the Gentiles to the kingdom of Christ, through the inspiration of the apostles by the power of the Holy Ghost. The second lessons (Acts iv. to ver. 36, and Acts xix. to ver. 21.) record the accomplishment of this prophecy, in the miraculous cures which were wrought by the apostles by the power of the Holy Ghost, and in the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Christian converts. The gospel records our Lord's promise of sending the Comforter, and the epistle describes the miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost and its consequences.

Q. What are we to believe concerning the Holy Ghost?

A. The Holy Ghost is the third person in the adorable Trinity, distinct from the Father and the Son, and eternally proceeding from both; being called the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father.[a]

Q. What are the various gifts of the Holy Spirit?

A. All the gifts of the Holy Ghost may be ranged under the following: the *apostolical*, the *ecclesiastical*, and the *ordinary* gifts.*

Q. What were those gifts of the Spirit styled apostolical?

[a] Rom. viii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 11. Gal. iv. 6.

* See Bishop Horne's excellent sermon, entitled, "The unspeakable Gift;" from which the following account of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is principally taken.

A. The gifts of the Spirit styled *apostolical*, were those conferred by God on the apostles, in order that they might proclaim and establish the Christian faith. For this purpose, they had conferred on them "the word of wisdom," the revelation of the wisdom of God in the redemption. They had "the word of knowledge," or the gift of understanding the Scriptures which contain and describe this wisdom. They had "faith," to remove all obstacles by miracles, and to give them an invincible confidence and courage. They had the gift of "healing" all diseases by a single word, and the power of working all "miracles," of controlling the agency of created nature. They had the gift of "prophecy," to explain things past, and to foretel things future; to preach and pray at all times by the Spirit, till all things were put in order, and the Church services framed and established. They could "discern spirits," and see through all the devices and disguises of Satan at a glance. And they had the gift of "tongues, and their interpretation," by which the same persons were enabled to speak and understand all the languages under heaven, without a moment's labour.

Q. When were these miraculous gifts conferred on the apostles?

A. These miraculous gifts were conferred upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; when there came suddenly a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the place where they were sitting;[b] and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, which sat upon each of them.

Q. What doth this sound from heaven represent to us?

A. This sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, was a fit emblem of the divine Spirit, by whose efficacy the Gospel was to have a speedy and unexpected success: and it signifies to us, that the promulgation of the Gospel was attended with the same divine presence and power that the giving of the law was, but not with the same circumstances of terror.

Q. What do the cloven tongues represent to us?

A. The cloven tongues, as it were of fire, represent to us not only the gift of various languages conferred on the apostles, to enable them to preach to divers nations, but also the quick and piercing efficacy of their speech.

[b] Acts ii 3.

Q. What evidence is there that this miracle was real, and that there was no deception in it?

A. The gift of tongues was conferred on the apostles before many witnesses who were enemies to them; and they gave proof of this miraculous power in the presence of great multitudes of several nations, and in all places where they went preaching the Gospel.

Q. What is the measure of grace styled ecclesiastical?

A. The measure of grace styled *ecclesiastical*, is that which is given to the ordinary ministry, for the standing government and edification of the Church. This is different, both from the apostolical and from the ordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit. The end of the apostolical gifts was the establishment of the Church; the end of the ecclesiastical is the preservation of it, by the exercise of discipline, the preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments. As to its nature, it is a commission, or an office, concerning which it is a rule established, that "no man taketh it unto himself."[e] This ecclesiastical gift, therefore, is also distinct from the ordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, which all Christians enjoy; for internal gifts and graces may qualify a man for an office, but they cannot put him into one. No man, however righteous and holy through faith and the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, can have authority to act in the name of Christ, till Christ, by those whom he has appointed for the purpose, gives him that authority. Holiness of office is as distinct from holiness of life, as the cause is from the effect; one is given to the ministry, that the other may be produced in the people: and, though all men that are in holy offices ought to lead holy lives, and it should be a part of our daily prayers to God to enable them to do so, yet a failure in duty is not a forfeiture of authority. If this necessary distinction between holiness of office and holiness of person be not kept up, the end for which a ministry was appointed will not be attained; all will be teachers, and no hearers; all governors, and no subjects; the Church, as a society, will be dissolved, and confusion introduced into the spiritual system.

Q. What are the ordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit?

A. The ordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit are those which are given for the personal sanctification of individuals. Man, as a fallen creature, stands in need of deliverance

[e] Heb. v. 4.

from the guilt and power of sins past, and an emancipation from the power of sin, present and future. He needs to be justified, and to be sanctified. Man is justified by the blood of Christ effectually offered and pleaded for him in the presence of God, upon his repentance and faith: and Christ having made atonement for sin by the shedding of his blood, ascended to plead it; and then sent his Spirit to sanctify the soul of every sinner who, by repentance and faith, through the ministration of the Church, lays hold on the benefits of Christ's intercession.

Q. What is the necessity of the sanctification of our nature, and wherein does it consist?

A. Since without holiness it is impossble to please God, or attain that happiness which consists in the enjoyment of him; and since the frailty and corruption of our nature are so great, that we cannot of ourselves attain this holiness; God hath sent to us his Holy Spirit to sanctify us, to be the author of all internal holiness, and the principle of our spiritual life; and, therefore, this blessed Spirit gives clearness to our faith, zeal to our charity, and strength and power to all our graces.

Q. When may the Holy Spirit be said to give clearness to our faith?

A. The Holy Spirit gives clearness to our faith, when he internally illuminates our minds, and inclines them to obedience to the will of God, externally revealed in the holy Scriptures; so that our faith becomes strong enough to govern our practice, and influence our lives.

Q. When does the Holy Spirit give zeal to our charity?

A. The Holy Spirit gives zeal to our charity, when the love of God, which he sheds abroad in our hearts, leads us earnestly to discharge our duty, and to seek to promote the spiritual welfare and happiness of our fellow men; recommending religion by our holy conversation and example, and enforcing it by our prayers, our benefactions, and our instructions to all those over whom we may have influence, and particularly to our families and dependents.

Q. When does the Holy Spirit give strength and power to all our graces?

A. The Holy Spirit gives strength and power to all our graces, when he subdues within us the power of sinful passions, and raises us above the vain allurements and corrupting pleasures of the world; when the difficulties and dangers that assail us in our religious course, serve only, through

his inspirations, to enkindle our ardour, and animate our resolution; and when the duties of self-denial, patience, and forbearance, which, to worldly minds, appear so difficult, are embraced with joy and satisfaction, through the power of that divine grace to which "nothing is impossible."

Q. It will be proper to explain more particularly the office of the Holy Spirit towards us. Is it not his office to illuminate our minds?

A. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to illuminate our minds with the knowledge of divine truth.[d] All supernatural light and wisdom have ever proceeded from him. He has revealed, by the inspiration of prophets and apostles, the objects of faith; and he enlightens our minds, naturally ignorant and prone to error, to apprehend divine truth; and, by the representation of proper arguments, persuades our reason to embrace it.

Q. Is it not the office of the Holy Ghost to purify and renew us?

A. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to purify and renew us; to set our wills and affections free from all sinful inclinations and desires: and when he has reduced our wills and affections to a sincere compliance with the laws of God, he confirms and strengthens us; so that, while we are diligent and watchful, no examples or temptations, no sinful pleasures or allurements, no afflictions or persecutions, shall shake or overcome our constancy.

Q. Is it not the office of the Holy Ghost to excite and quicken us?

A. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to excite and quicken us in the ways of piety and virtue. As by his sanctifying influence he first inspired us with spiritual life, so he still proceeds to cherish and invigorate it; prompting us forward to all good actions, strengthening us in the discharge of duty, and inflaming our resolution and zeal.

Q. Is it not the office of the Holy Ghost to comfort and sustain us?

A. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to comfort and sustain us in our Christian course; to inspire our minds with such joys and consolations as are necessary to support us under the difficulties and temptations to which we are exposed; to give us a foretaste of that happiness prepared for us, which raises us above all the sorrows and trials of life.

[d] Eph. i. 17, &c.

Q. Is it not the office of the Holy Spirit to direct and assist our devotions by his powerful intercession?

A. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to direct and assist our devotions by his powerful intercession.[e] We are not able of ourselves so much as to think a good thought, much less to withdraw our minds from sensible things to divine and spiritual truths. The Holy Spirit warms our cold affections, and inflames our hearts with devotion towards God, and excites in us those dispositions and affections which qualify us to approach the throne of grace.

Q. How may we obtain these ordinary influences of the Holy Sprit?

A. We may obtain these ordinary influences of the Holy Spirit, by the use of those means which God hath appointed for the purpose, and which are therefore called the *means of grace;* by humble, sincere, and earnest prayer; by frequently reading and hearing God's holy word; and especially by a devout and uniform attendance on the ordinances of the Church: for to the Church, as his body, Christ has given his Holy Spirit; and, by union with the Church, by the participation of its ordinances, we derive the influences of this Spirit.

Q. What useful consideration does this festival suggest to us?

A. This festival should teach us devoutly to thank God for those miraculous gifts by which he qualified and enabled his apostles to promulgate and establish the Gospel in the world. Above all, we should gratefully adore and acknowledge the Holy Spirit, as the author of our spiritual life, of all good dispositions and all good works; we should earnestly desire and pray for his purifying and consoling influences; we should hearken attentively to his holy suggestions, and carefully obey them, not quenching his divine light, not resisting his gracious persuasions, not grieving or vexing him; but, on the contrary, in dependence on his aids, we should endeavour to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, that we may be temples in which he will delight to dwell. If we will faithfully apply ourselves to him, we shall be able, through his strengthening power, to discharge the most severe duties, and to overcome the most powerful temptations.

[e] Eph. ii. 18. Rom. viii. 26.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MONDAY *and* TUESDAY *in* WHITSUN WEEK.

FESTIVALS.

Q. WHAT *shows the solemnity of the festival which the Church celebrates this day?*

A. The Church has set apart these two days for the exercise of religious duties; it being her design that we should offer up our praises and thanksgivings to God for the gracious display of his grace and mercy in the Gospel; which Gospel was confirmed by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the miraculous gifts which he bestowed on the Apostles.

Q. Explain the lessons for Monday.

A. The first lesson for Monday morning (Gen. xi. to ver. 10.) is a history of the confusion of tongues at Babel; whereby the Church designs to remind us, that as the confusion of tongues spread idolatry through the world, and made men lose the knowledge of God and true religion, so God provided, by the gift of tongues, for the restoration of the knowledge of himself among men, and for laying the foundation of a new religion. In the first lesson for Monday evening (Numb. xi.) is recorded the resting of God's Spirit upon the seventy elders of Israel, to enable them to ease Moses of part of his burden in governing that numerous people. This event exactly prefigured the descent of the same Holy Spirit at this time upon the Apostles and others to the same end, viz. that the care of all the Churches might not lie upon one single person. The second lessons for this day (1 Cor. xii. and xiv. to ver. 26.) instruct us that the spiritual gifts, of whatever sort they are, are all given "to profit withal;" and therefore designed to be made use of for edification, as their true and proper end.

Q. Explain the lessons for Tuesday.

A. The first lesson for Tuesday morning (1 Samuel xix. ver. 18.) relates the inspiration of Saul and his messengers by the Spirit of God. The first lesson for the evening (Deut. xxx.) contains a prophecy of Moses, how God would deal with the Jews upon their repentance; alluding to the time when, by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Jews, God's ancient people, should be brought home to his spiritual fold,

the Church of Christ. The second lesson for the morning (1 Thess. v.) forbids us "to quench the Spirit" of God, or to despise the prophecies uttered by it. And the second lesson for the evening (Gal. v.) exhorts us to cherish all those graces of the Holy Spirit which are the fulfilling of the law; and as we are "led by the Spirit," it exhorts us to "walk by the Spirit," "crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts."

Q. Explain the collects, epistles, and gospels for these days.

A. The collects for these days are the same as for Whitsunday. The epistles are concerning the baptism of converts; Whitsuntide and Easter being, as has been before observed, the more solemn time for performing that ceremony. The epistles also relate to the receiving of the Holy Ghost by the hands of the Apostles; this being the season for confirmation, which was always done by the imposition of hands. The gospel for Monday seems to have been chosen for the instruction of those newly baptized; teaching them to believe in Christ, and to become children of the light. The gospel for Tuesday seems to be appointed in consideration of this being one of the Ember or Ordination weeks; the design of it being to put a difference between those who are lawfully appointed and ordained to the ministry, and those who, without any commission, arrogate to themselves that sacred office.*

CHAPTER XXXV.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHEN *was this festival, in commemoration of the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, instituted in the Church?*

A. This festival, in commemoration of the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, is comparatively of modern date. As the praises of the Trinity were every day celebrated in the

* The substance of the two chapters in the original work of Nelson, on Monday and Tuesday in Whitsun Week, in the present work constitutes "he preliminary instructions on the evidences of the Christian religion."

doxology, hymns, and creeds, the ancient Church thought there was no need to set apart one particular day for that which was done in each. This Sunday, therefore, was orignally no otherwise distinguished than as an octave of Pentecost. The Church, however, in consequence of the heresies of Arius and others, who opposed this divine mystery, thought proper to order that the mystery of the Trinity should be more solemnly commemorated on a particular day.

Q. What reasons led to the institution of this particular day for the commemoration of the mystery of the Trinity?

A. This day was chosen in preference to any other for the more solemn commemoration of this mystery, because, after our Lord's ascension into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the disciples, there ensued the full knowledge of the glorious and incomprehensible doctrine of the Trinity. The Church having celebrated in order all the greater festivals, the Nativity, Epiphany, Resurrection, Ascension of our Lord, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost, concludes these solemnities with a festival of full, special, and express service to the honour of the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity.

Q. Explain the lessons for the day.

A. The first lesson for the morning (Gen. i.) seems plainly to set forth three persons in the Godhead. For, besides the "Spirit of God," which "moved upon the waters," (ver. 2.) we find the great Creator (ver. 26.) consulting with other persons of the Godhead, concerning the greatest work of creation, the making of man; the creation of whom, by the almighty power of the Godhead, is recorded in the first lesson for the evening, (Gen. ii.) The second lesson for the morning (Matt. iii.) contains one of the most express proofs of this mystery; for it relates at one and the same time the baptism of the Son, the declaration of the Father concerning the Son, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him. The second lesson for the evening (John v.) shows, that these three persons, though distinct in number, are but one in essence.

Q. What are we to believe concerning the mystery of the Holy Trinity?

A. We are to believe that "there is but one true God everlasting, without body, parts, or passions, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the maker and preserver of all things, both visible and invisible; and in the unity of this Godhead

there be three persons of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost."*

Q. What is meant by the word person?

A. The word *person* signifies the essence of the Godhead, with a particular manner of subsistence. Each person of the adorable Trinity possesses the essence of the Godhead, and yet subsists in such a particular manner, that the three persons are distinct. "The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son, neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding."†

Q. Why do we believe the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to be three distinct persons in one divine nature?

A. The Holy Scriptures, in speaking of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, distinguish them from one another, as we would in common speech distinguish three several persons. They are thus distinguished in the form of administering baptism, which is "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;"[f] also in the Apostolic benediction, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost."[g]

Q. How does it appear that each of these persons is God?

A. Each of these persons is God, because the names, attributes, and acts of God, are attributed to each of them in the Holy Scriptures.

Q. Where are the names, attributes, and acts of God attributed to the second person in the blessed Trinity, the Son?

A. The names, attributes, and acts of God are, in various places, attributed unto the Son, manifested in the flesh, as Jesus Christ the Saviour. St. John says, "the word was made flesh:"[h] St. Paul, that "God was manifested in the flesh;"[i] that "Christ is over all, God blessed for ever."[j] Eternity is attributed to Jesus Christ the Son; "the Son hath life in himself. He is the same, and his years shall not fail."[k] Perfection of knowledge is attributed to him; "as the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father;"[l] as also the creation of all things; "all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."[m] We are commanded to "honour the Son, as we honour the Fa-

* Article 1. † Athanasian Creed.

[f] Matt. xxviii. 19. [g] 2 Cor. xiii. 14. [h] John i. 14.
[i] 1 Tim. iii. 16. [j] Rom. ix. 5. [k] John v. 26. Heb. i. 12.
[l] John x. 15. [m] John i. 3

ther."[m] The glorified Saints sing Hallelujahs, as to God the Father, so also to "the Lamb for ever and ever."[n] And Jesus himself[o] is introduced, saying, "I am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."[p]

Q. Where are the names, attributes, and acts of God attributed to the third person in the blessed Trinity, the Holy Ghost?

A. That the Holy Ghost is a divine person, is evident from many passages of Scripture. "Lying to the Holy Ghost" is called "lying unto God."[q] And because Christians are "the temples of the Holy Ghost," they are said to be "the temples of God."[r] His "teaching all things;" his "guiding unto all truth;" his "telling things to come;" his "searching all things, even the deep things of God;" his being called "the Spirit of the Lord," in opposition to "the spirit of man," are plain proofs of the divinity of the Holy Ghost. He is joined also with God the Father, "who will not give his glory to another," as an object of faith and worship, in baptism, and in the Apostolical benediction.

Q. Do these persons constitute but one God?

A. Though the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost do each of them partake of the divine nature, yet there is but one God. The Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped; "the Lord our God is one Lord."[s] "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Hosts."[t]

Q. Is there any subordination among the persons of the Trinity?

A. The persons of the adorable Trinity are all co-equal, and co-eternal. In respect to power and glory "none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another." The only subordination is that of order, the Son being "begotten of the Father," and the Holy Ghost "proceeding from the Father and the Son." Christ is called the "only begotten Son of God."[u] And the Holy Ghost is said to be the Spirit of the Father, and of the Son.[v]

Q. Wherein consists the mystery of the blessed Trinity?

A. The mystery of the Trinity consists in our not being able to comprehend the manner of the existence of the three persons in the same divine nature.

Q. Is it reasonable to believe things concerning God which we cannot comprehend?

m John v. 23. n Rev. vii. 10. p Rev. xxii. 16.
q Rev. xxii. 13. r Acts v. 3, 4 s 1 Cor. iii. 16.
t Deut. vi. 4. u Isa. vi. 3. v John iii. 16
w Rom viii. 11. Gal. iv. 6.

A. The divine nature is infinite, and, consequently, above our comprehension; and, therefore, there can be no ground from reason to reject any doctrine which God has revealed concerning his ineffable nature, though it be very mysterious, and the manner of it incomprehensible by us.

Q. Is it not a contradiction to say, that each of the divine persons is God, and yet that there are not three Gods, but one God?

A. It is not said that the divine persons are one and three in the same respect—they are one as substance; they are three as to manner of subsistence. The divine essence is that alone which makes God; that can be but one; and therefore there can be no more Gods than one. But because the scriptures, which assure us of the unity of the divine essence, do likewise, with the Father, join the Son and the Holy Ghost in the same attributes, operations, and worship; therefore we believe that they are distinct as to the relation which they bear to each other, but not as to their essence, which is but one.

Q. Are we not bound to believe doctrines of Christianity which we cannot comprehend?

A. It is a true distinction, that things may be above our reason, without being contrary to it. Of this kind are, the nature, the power, the universal presence of God. The most common operations of nature, the growth of an animal, a plant, or of the smallest seed, are mysteries to the wisest among men. The manner whereby the soul and body are united, and how they are distinguished, is as great a mystery as that of the Trinity. God will never require us to believe what is absolutely contradictory, either to our senses, or our reason. But every truth relating to his divine nature must necessarily be above our reason. Yet all these truths, if they come attested by proper evidence, we are bound to receive. The mystery attending them is no reason for rejecting them. For if we disbelieve the existence of whatever is incomprehensible, we shall be led into universal doubt and skepticism.

Q. What then is the use of reason in religion?

A. By reason we try the evidence and proof of revealed religion. The only proper exercise of reason in a Christian, is to inquire and examine, whether what is proposed and required to be believed, is revealed by God; whether it comes with the *true credentials* of his authority, and hath him really

for its author. When convinced of the authority of divine revelation, reason assists us to discern and ascertain its true and genuine sense; to illustrate and enforce its doctrines; and to apply the general rules contained in it to all special cases. Reason itself would dictate to us to receive every doctrine revealed by God, though it may be above our comprehension. For God is infinitely wise and omniscient, and therefore cannot be deceived; and being infinitely good, we may be sure he will not deceive us.

Q. Is not the doctrine of the Trinity a practical doctrine, and closely interwoven with the principles of the Christian life?

A. The doctrine of the Trinity is a practical doctrine, and closely interwoven with the principles of the Christian life. There are no motives to obedience more affecting or more endearing than the love of God the Father, in sending his beloved Son to redeem us; and the love and condescension of God the Son, in submitting to be sent. To deny the divinity of Christ alters the very foundations of Christianity, and destroys all the powerful motives drawn from the love, the humility, and condescension of our blessed Lord, which are the peculiar motives of the Gospel. The doctrine of the atonement is necessarily connected with the doctrine of the Trinity. It is not possible for the blood of any creature to take away the sins of the world; since no creature can do more than his duty, nor can he have any stock of merit to spare for other creatures. The scriptures assure us, that it was Jehovah who was pierced;[x] it was God who purchased the Church with his own blood;[y] it was the High Lord who bought us;[z] it was the Lord of glory who was crucified.[a] Whoever, therefore, denies the divinity of Christ, overthrows the doctrine of the atonement, and consequently leaves the penalty of the divine law, which we have violated, in full force against us. The doctrine of the Trinity, too, is closely interwoven with the doctrine of divine grace and assistance: for if the Holy Spirit be a creature, and if a creature be the only instrument and principle of grace, we shall soon be tempted, either to deny the grace of God, or to make it only an external thing, and entertain a very low opinion of its power and efficacy. The doctrine of the Trinity, therefore, is interwoven with the very frame and texture of the

x Zech. xii. 10, compared with John xix. 37. y Acts xx. 28.
z 2 Pet. ii. 1. a 1 Cor. ii. 8. Compare 1 John i. 7, Heb. ix 14.

Christian system, with the whole scheme and economy of man's redemption.*

Q. What instruction should we derive from the observation of this festival?

A. Since God is an infinite and eternal Spirit, and therefore beyond the comprehension of any finite understanding, we should learn the duty of implicitly receiving whatever he reveals to us concerning his own divine nature, though we may not be able to comprehend it. Without entering into curious and useless speculations concerning the mystery of the Trinity, it should be our business humbly to adore the three persons of the Godhead, as the joint authors of our salvation. We should humbly and gratefully acknowledge the transcendent love of God the Father, in giving for us his only Son; and the wonderful condescension of our blessed Redeemer, the merit of whose suffering was enhanced by the dignity and excellence of his person; and we should gratefully adore the third person of the Godhead, the blessed and eternal Spirit, who governs and sanctifies the Church, and all its faithful members. The doctrine of the Trinity should lead us to the most humble and holy obedience, and inspire us with the highest consolation and triumph; for it reveals God the Father reconciled unto us, through the atonement of a divine Redeemer; and it reveals the divine Spirit of grace, by whom we are guided, sanctified, and consoled.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Of the SUNDAYS *from* TRINITY *to* ADVENT.

Q. WHAT *remark do you make concerning the gospels and epistles for the Sundays from Trinity to Advent?*

A. The design of the Church in that part of the year, from Trinity to Advent, being to instruct us in the duties of the Christian life, such passages out of the Evangelists are selected for the gospels as are calculated to this end; to advance us in the graces and virtues of the Christian life. The

* The practical nature and tendency of the doctrine of the Trinity, are admirably illustrated in a Treatise, entitled, "The Importance of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity asserted," written by Dr. Waterland, who is well known as one of the most profound and able defenders of this doctrine. The Rev. William Jones, of Nayland, in his "Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity," has put the question, whether this doctrine be revealed in *scripture*, beyond all further controversy.

epistles, (which are taken out of St. Paul's epistles,) tend to the same end.

Q. What is the design of the epistle and gospel for the twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity?

A. The twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity being considered as a preparation, or forerunner to Advent, an epistle was chosen for it, which clearly foretels the coming of Christ. The collect, epistle, and gospel, are thought so appropriate to this season, that it is directed by a rubric after the gospel, that they shall always be used on the Sunday next before Advent.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

ST. BARNABAS *the* APOSTLE, June 11.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *account do you give of the Apostle Barnabas?*

A. St. Barnabas was born at Cyprus; and was descended of the tribe of Levi.[b] His parents, who were rich and pious, sent him to Jerusalem, and committed him to the care of Gamaliel, a great doctor of the law; at whose feet he was brought up together with St. Paul.

Q. What is the design of the epistle and gospel for the day?

A. The epistle gives an account of the character of Barnabas, and his mission to Antioch. And the gospel records Christ's distinguishing love for his Apostles (among whom Barnabas was one of the most eminent,) and excites them, from the love of Christ to them, to love one another, and to bring forth fruits worthy of their distinguished privileges.

Q. What were the names of this Apostle?

A. The proper name of this Apostle was Joses; to which the Apostles added that of Barnabas, either implying him to be a son of prophecy, eminent for his prophetic gifts;[c] or a son of consolation, from his skill in comforting troubled consciences, or from the consolation which he administered to the poor by the sale of his property for their relief.[d]

b Acts iv. 36. c Acts xi. 24. d Acts iv. 37.

Q. Did not Barnabas introduce St. Paul into the society of the Apostles?

A. Not long after St. Paul's conversion, Barnabas met him at Jerusalem, and introduced him to the Apostles; declaring to them the manner of his conversion, and the signal evidences which he gave of his sincerity at Damascus, by his bold and resolute disputes with the Jews; thus removing from the minds of the Apostles all apprehension of the sincerity of St. Paul's conversion.[e]

Q. What was the first employment of Barnabas in the service of the Church?

A. News from Antioch being brought to the Church at Jerusalem, that many in that city embraced Christianity, St. Barnabas was sent to establish these new converts in the faith. Upon his arrival, he rejoiced to see the great progress which the Gospel had made among them; and finding he required a coadjutor in his labours, he went to Tarsus, where St. Paul then was, and brought him to Antioch; where they laboured together a year in the establishment of the Church.[f]

Q. Where were the followers of Jesus first called Christians?

A. The followers of Jesus were first called Christians at Antioch.[g] They who embraced the faith were styled, at first, disciples or believers, the brethren, men of the Church, or callers upon the name of Christ, or men of that way; or, by their enemies, Nazarenes or Galileans.[h] But they afterwards gloried so much in the name of Christians, that sooner than renounce it, they endured scorn, persecution, torture, and death itself.

Q. What obligations do the name of Christians impose upon us?

A. When we took upon us, at Baptism, the name of Christian, we solemnly engaged to believe and practise what Christ taught, to imitate his example, to cleave with steadfastness to him, and to renounce all those sinful lusts and passions which are opposed to his holy commands.

Q. Was not St. Barnabas, with St. Paul, employed to relieve the Christians at Judea?

A. St. Barnabas, with St. Paul, carried a charitable supply from the Christians at Antioch, to relieve the brethren in Judea; who were reduced to great necessities by a severe

e Acts ix. 27. f Acts xi. 26. g Acts xi. 26
h Acts ix. 26. v. 14. vi. 3. xii. 1. ix. 14. ix. 2. xxiv 5. ii. 7.

famine which afflicted the provinces of the Roman empire, and particularly Judea.[i]

Q. Was not St. Barnabas, with St. Paul, solemnly set apart to preach the Gospel to the Gentile world?

A. At the particular command of the Holy Ghost, revealed to the prophets and teachers of the Church at Antioch, St. Barnabas and St. Paul were solemnly set apart, after fasting and prayer, by the ancient ceremony of imposition of hands, to the work to which God had called them—to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Accordingly, after preaching the Gospel at Cyprus, and various places of the Lesser Asia, they, after three years, returned again to Antioch.[j]

Q. What was the occasion of the dissension between St. Paul and Barnabas?

A. These two Apostles having agreed to visit the Churches which they had planted in Asia, St. Barnabas proposed to take his kinsman, Mark, along with them; to which St. Paul refused his consent, because, in their former travels, Mark had consulted too much his own ease and safety, and had left them at Pamphylia. The contention was so sharp between them that they parted. St Paul, with Silas, went to the Churches of Syria and Cilicia; and St. Barnabas, with Mark, to his own country, Cyprus.[k]

Q. Did not the providence of God overrule this dissension of the Apostles to the benefit of the Church?

A. By this separation of the Apostles, their labours were rendered more diffuse, and, of course, more useful to the Church. And it probably tended to bring St. Mark to a sense of his former indifference in the work of the Gospel, and to make him a useful minister of the Church: for we afterwards find St. Paul giving a high testimony of his zeal, "that he was profitable to him for the ministry."[l]

Q. Are there any more particulars known concerning the life of Barnabas?

A. It is uncertain what became of Barnabas after he separated from St. Paul and went to Cyprus. It is supposed that he suffered martyrdom at Salamis, where it is said he was stoned by the Jews.

Q. What writings did he leave behind him?

A. It was thought that he was the author of an Epistle to the Jewish converts, which was of great repute among the primitive Christians, and sometimes used in their Churches.

i Acts xi. 30. *j* Acts xiii. 4, &c. *k* Acts xv. 39 *l* 2 Tim. iv. 11.

but was never admitted into the canon of the Holy Scripture.

Q. What useful instruction does this festival afford?

A. The self-denying zeal of this Apostle, in the propagation of the Gospel, should lead us to seize every opportunity which offers of advancing the interests of true religion. The exalted charity of this Apostle in disposing of his property for the good of the Church, should inspire us with the same pious and benevolent zeal. The severe contention which arose between St. Paul and Barnabas may serve to teach us, that as the best of men are fallible, we should take the commands of God as the unerring rules of our conduct. We should endeavour, as far as we can, to avoid all subjects of strife and contention; and when obliged to enter into controversy, we should conduct it with mildness and moderation.

Q. How should civil differences be managed among Christians?

A. We ought never to prosecute any civil difference purely from a principle of revenge; we ought to recede from our own right in small matters, rather than to expose ourselves to the evils and temptations of going to law. But when the matter is of much importance as to require our appealing to a legal tribunal, we must be careful not to contract guilt by delaying justice, by any acts of circumvention, or by suggesting false pleas only to obtain time, and to make the suit expensive and vexatious.

Q. How ought religious controversy to be conducted?

A. Religious controversy should be conducted with a single desire to the discovery of truth; without any aim at victory over our opponents, or at reputation for our superior learning and knowledge; without casting contempt or scorn upon those who oppose us. If they are under the power of error, they are objects of Christian compassion; and by injurious or scornful treatment, we shall only harden them against the truth, and confirm them in their errors. We should never detract from the real worth of our adversaries, or charge them with consequences of their opinions which are unfair, and which they would disclaim. We should never, under pretence of a zeal for God's glory, give vent to our passions; but we should give an account of our faith with that meekness which governs the unreasonable sallies of anger, and with that fear which makes us cautious not to transgress those rules of charity which we are bound observe toward our neighbour.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY, *June 24.*

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *do you remark concerning the lessons, epistle, and gospel for the day?*

A. The lessons, epistle, and gospel for the day, record the prophecies concerning John Baptist, and the circumstances of his birth, his life, and death.

Q. Were there not some remarkable circumstances attending the birth of St. John Baptist?

A. His birth was foretold by an angel, when his mother Elizabeth was barren, and both his parents "well stricken in years." And his father Zacharias had the assurance of his birth confirmed to him by a miraculous dumbness. His birth was the occasion of great joy to all who expected the Messiah, of whom John was to be the forerunner.[m]

Q. What was foretold of him by the angel?

A. The angel foretold that he should be great in the sight of the Lord, and should neither drink wine nor strong drink; that "he should be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb;" that he should convert many of the Jews, and prepare the way of the Lord; and, consequently, that he should be the forerunner of the Saviour, and the greatest of all the prophets.[n]

Q. How did St. John execute the office of the forerunner of our Saviour?

A. His whole ministry tended to prepare the way for the reception of our Saviour and his doctrines. He was eminently qualified for his ministry, by adding to the grace of his birth extraordinary innocence of life, which he preserved by withdrawing from all the temptations to sin, and by a strict and severe course of mortification and self-denial. In executing his ministry, he proclaimed to the Jews the approach of the Messiah; that he whom they had so long expected was nigh at hand, and that his kingdom was ready to appear; and that, therefore, they should, by breaking off their sins by sincere repentance and reformation of life, prepare themselves to receive the glad tidings of the Gospel.[o]

[m] Luke i. 7, &c. [n] Luke i. 15, &c. [o] Matt. iii. 2

Q. Was not the coming and the office of St. John Baptist foretold by the prophets?

A. Isaiah calls him "the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make straight in the desert a highway for our God."[p] Malachi styles him, "The messenger that was to prepare the way of the Lord."[q] And also describes him under the character of Elijah the prophet, who was to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers."[r]

Q. But did not St. John the Baptist deny that he was Elias, who was to come?[s]

A. When John the Baptist, in reply to the inquiries of the rulers of the Jews, who generally believed that Elias was to come again in his own person, denied that he was Elias, he only meant to declare that he was not that same Elias who had lived in the time of King Ahab. His afterwards declaring[t] that he was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," &c. as foretold by the prophet Esaias, proved that he was the Elias spoken of by Malachi, to whom the prophecy in Isaiah is acknowledged to have referred.[u] St. John the Baptist, therefore, though not Elias in person, came in "the spirit and power of Elias,"[v] whom he resembled in character and in office. The business of both was to promote a general reformation of manners. They were both eminent prophets, superior to those of the same character in their own age. They were both of singular abstinence aud austerity, retired from the world, and distinguished from the fashions of it by a particular habit. They were both courageous and zealous in opposing the prevailing sins of their own times, though the great and powerful were the supporters of them.[w]

Q. What was St. John's manner of living till he entered upon his office?

A. After he had providentially escaped the cruel designs of Herod, who sought to kill him, he retired early into the deserts, where he led a solitary and mortified life; his habit was a "rough garment made of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle;" his food were "locusts and wild honey."[x] Locusts were a common food in the east, and the wild honey was such as the bees had stored up in hollow trees or caverns, and which was often found in the woods.

p Isa. xl. 3. q Mal. iii. 1. r Mal. iv. 5, 6. Matt. xi. 14
s John i. 21. t John i. 23. u Mark i. 1, 2, &c.
v Luke i. 17. w 1 Kings xvii. 1. Matt. xi. 11. 1 Kings xvii. 4, 16. xix. 6, 7, 8.
2 Kings 8. Luke i. 80. Matt. iii. 4. 1 Kings xviii. x Matt. iii. 4.

Q. What character did our Saviour give of St. John Baptist?

A. Our Saviour testified that "of them who are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist;" and that he "came neither eating nor drinking;"[y] implying that his way of living was more than ordinarily rigorous and austere.

Q. Wherein did St. John the Baptist exceed those prophets who went before him?

A. St. John the Baptist exceeded the rest of the prophets in the excellency of his office; which was to fit and prepare the minds of the people for the immediate reception of Christ and his doctrine, both which were attested by St. John in a plainer manner than by any of the old prophets.[z] He was honoured also with more signal revelations; and his doctrine attended with greater success and efficacy, almost the whole nation coming to his baptism, confessing their sins.[a]

Q. How was St. John the Baptist called to his office?

A. "The word of God came to him;"[b] which phrase, as used in the scriptures, implies the communication of the prophetic spirit to those who were to be extraordinary preachers to the people. The spirit of prophecy, which ceased among the Jews since the death of Malachi, was now revived in John the Baptist, and was to be continued by the great prophet Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

Q. What was the success of St. John's ministry?

A. The resolute preaching of St. John, together with the severity of his life, drew to him many hearers from Jerusalem and Judea, and from the region round about Jordan;[c] and great was the number of his proselytes whom he baptized. In his preaching he resolutely condemned the views of all ranks and orders of men, and pressed upon them the duties of their particular stations and relations.[d]

Q. Why was St. John called the Baptist?

A. St. John was called the Baptist, because by baptism he imposed on his converts the obligations to repentance; and because he enjoyed the distinguished honour of baptizing the Saviour.

Q. Why was the baptism of St. John styled the baptism of repentance?

A. The baptism of St. John was called the baptism of repentance, because he was the first who used baptism to

y Matt. xi. 11. z John i. 7, 29, 32, 33. a Matt. iii. 5, 6.
b Luke iii. 2. c Matt. iii. 5, 6. d Luke iii 7, &c.

denote and to enforce repentance; which was the principal qualification required of those who became his disciples, and which was necessary to dispose them to receive our Saviour, and to entitle them to that pardon of sin which the Gospel brought along with it.

Q. How did St. John bear testimony of our Saviour?

A. St. John ingenuously declared to the Jews who supposed him to be the promised Messiah, that he was not the Christ, but that there was one to come after him, "the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose."[e] St. John was eminently qualified to bear testimony to our Saviour, for God had revealed to him, in a miraculous manner, that Jesus was the Son of God.[f]

Q. What then led St. John to send two of his disciples to inquire, Whether our Saviour was he that should come, or whether they should look for another?[g]

A. The disciples of St. John believed him to be a prophet sent from God; and they could not therefore bear his testimony of Christ, because it set him above their master. That they cherished this jealousy of Christ, is evident from the complaint which they made, "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him."[h] St. John, therefore, who could have no doubt in his own mind, sent his disciples to inquire of the Saviour, whether he was the Christ, in order that they might be satisfied by the declaration of the Saviour himself, and might be thus induced to adhere to him.

Q. In what manner, and upon what occasion, was St. John the Baptist put to death?

A. St. John the Baptist was beheaded by the command of Herod, whom he had provoked by his freedom in reproving him for his illicit and incestuous connexion with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. The daughter of Herodias, dancing before Herod on his birth-day, pleased him so much, that he promised her, with an oath, to give her whatsoever she should ask. Being instructed by Herodias, her mother, she demands the head of St. John the Baptist. Accordingly Herod, under pretence of reverence to his oath, ordered, though somewhat reluctantly, that John the Baptist should be beheaded.[i]

Q. Why did Herod yield with reluctance to the request that St. John the Baptist should be beheaded?

e Luke iii. 16. f John i. 31, 33, &c. g Matt. xi. 2, 3.
h John iii. 26. i Matt. xiv. 3, &c.

A. Herod somewhat reluctantly yielded to the request, that John the Baptist should be beheaded, not only because an execution was improper at so great a festival, but because he seems to have had some reverence for the character of St. John, esteeming him a just and holy person, and even "hearing him gladly."[j] He was also fearful that the people might resent his death, as they counted him to be a prophet.[k]

Q. What instruction may we derive from the observation of this festival?

A. The birth of a son to Zacharias and Elizabeth in their old age, should teach us the duty of a humble resignation to the will of God, who, when he sees best, will grant us whatsoever blessings are proper for us. The distrust which Zacharias discovered in the promise of God, should warn us against cherishing a spirit of unbelief, which is always most displeasing to God. The humble and mortified life of John the Baptist should teach us—that true greatness consists in the contempt of the pleasures of the world, and in cherishing that humble and pious spirit which will set us above its highest enjoyments; that the best means to preserve our piety is to retire, as much as possible, from temptation; and that it is our duty, by setting a strict guard upon our sensual appetites, and by frequently mortifying them, to keep our bodies in subjection to our minds. From the conduct of Herod, who committed a crime in order to fulfil a rash oath, we should learn, that an unlawful oath is not binding upon him who takes it; on the contrary, the breaking of it is a duty, and a part of that repentance which is due for the former rashness in making it. Since the greatest of prophets suffered the indignities of a prison, and fell by the hands of a common executioner, we may learn, that the true worth of men is not to be estimated by their outward circumstances in this world. And the example of St. John should lead us to take all prudent means to reprove the vices of others when the providence of God gives us a suitable opportunity.

Q. Wherein consists the nature of reproof, and whence arises its obligation?

A. The duty of reproof consists in putting others in mind of their duty, and in representing to them their faults. Christian charity, and compassion for the souls of men made after the image of God, and purchased by the blood of Christ, impose on us the duty of faithfully admonishing others. In

j Mark vi. 20. *k* Matt. xxi. 26

certain cases we shall incur positive guilt by the neglect of this duty; for ministers, magistrates, parents, and masters are answerable for those sins in others which are owing to their connivance and encouragement.

Q. How should this difficult duty of reproof be discharged?

A. The occasion which calls forth our reproof should be weighty and important; and we should take care, that our reproof be always free from passion or self-interest, and dictated only by a desire of doing good. It should likewise be expressed in the most decent and soft language, and at a time when favourable circumstances concur to render it effectual. When we reprehend the vices or errors of others, we should, at the same time, be willing to condemn ourselves; that, by exposing our own faults, we may, with the better grace, rectify those of others. We ought, by the just praises that we bestow, to endeavour to soften the severity our reproofs; and we should, by our mildness, humility, and affection, prove that we are influenced by an earnest desire to promote the good of him whose errors and faults we point out.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ST. PETER'S DAY, *June* 29.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *account is given of St. Peter?*

A. St. Peter was born at Bethsaida, a city of Galilee.[1] His father, Jonah, was a fisherman, which humble and laborious trade he and his brother Andrew followed. They were the two first disciples whom our Saviour called. St. Peter's original name, Simon or Simeon, was, at his first coming to Christ, changed into that of Cephas, which, in the Syrian language, signifies a *stone*, or *rock;* from this it was derived into the Greek πετρος, and so termed by us Peter. This name seems to denote the firmness and constancy which St. Peter should manifest in preaching the Gospel, and establishing the Church.

Q. What general remark do you make concerning the

[1] John i. 44, &c.

the mystery of the action, and the advantage of it, he desired to be washed all over, rather than lose the benefit of it.[u]

Q. What may we learn from this action of our Saviour?

A. From this conduct of our Saviour, we may learn the virtues of humility and condescension; we are taught not to decline the lowest acts of kindness and charity, since our blessed Lord thus abased himself.

Q. Did not St. Peter discover, on all occasions, a warm and impetuous temper?

A. St. Peter appears to have been naturally a man of a warm and impetuous temper, and heartily engaged in his Master's service. This disposition discovered itself in the zealous professions which he made in the garden, that though all should forsake his Master, yet would not he deny him;[v] and also in his zealous wish to use the sword in his Master's defence, for which he was rebuked by our Lord.

Q. Did not St. Peter deny his Master?

A. Trusting too much to his own strength, St. Peter became a signal example of human frailty, by denying that Master, to whose service he had so zealously pledged himself. The penetrating look of Christ awakened in St. Peter a poignant conviction of his guilt and ingratitude—he passionately lamented his base and ungrateful conduct, and thus became a lively pattern for us when we offend our gracious Lord and Master.

Q. Why did our Saviour appear first to St. Peter after his resurrection?

A. St. Peter was the Apostle to whom our blessed Lord first appeared after his resurrection. This honour was probably first conferred on St. Peter, to comfort him under his great sorrow for his fall, to encourage him with fresh assurances of the favour of Christ, and to confirm him in the great doctrine of the resurrection. And our Saviour required of him, as a farther proof of his love, to "feed his sheep," faithfully to instruct and teach them, carefully to rule and guide them.[w]

Q. Why does our Saviour inquire so particularly of St. Peter concerning his love for him?

A. In this conference, our Lord thrice questioned St. Peter concerning his love to him, with a view to put him in mind of his thrice denying his Saviour; that from the sense of his weakness, he might be engaged to a better discharge

[u] John xiii. 9, &c. [v] Mark xiv. 29, 31 [w] John xxi. 16.

of his duty, and give more than ordinary assurance of his sincere affection for his Master. And the pressing inquiries which our Lord made of St. Peter, concerning his love for him, will also teach us, that as nothing but a strong love to Christ will support a man under all the difficulties and dangers of the pastoral function, so the best testimony that can be given of a sincere affection in that great office, is carefully to feed the flock of Christ, and with zeal to endeavour to advance the salvation of men.

Q. What was the success of the first preaching of St. Peter and the rest of the Apostles?

A. At the first preaching of St. Peter and the other Apostles after the descent of the Holy Ghost, three thousand souls were converted.[x]

Q. How did St. Peter punish the sacrilege of Ananias and Sapphira?

A. St. Peter punished the sacrilege of Ananias and Sapphira with instant death.[y] They had consecrated some land unto God, and afterwards, through covetousness, they purloined part of the price for which it sold, and laid only part of the sum at the Apostle's feet. The dreadful punishment which they suffered should make all men careful not to alienate what is devoted to God; since what is so set apart, in a peculiar manner belongs to him, and the converting of it to other uses is robbing God.

Q. Where was St. Peter's first mission?

A. St. Peter's first mission was to Samaria; to which place he was sent to confirm those whom Philip the Deacon had converted; and, by prayer and imposition of hands, to communicate to them the gift of the Holy Ghost. He there severely rebuked Simon Magus for supposing that "the gift of God could be purchased with money."[z]

Q. How were the prejudices of St. Peter against preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles removed?

A. Soon after his return from Samaria, he had his national prejudices concerning the Gentiles removed by means of a special vision, when the relation of what had happened to Cornelius fully convinced him that God was no respecter of persons; and that in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.[a]

Q. What was St. Peter's conduct in the dispute between the Jewish and Gentile converts?

x Acts ii. 41. y Acts v. 5, 10. z Acts viii. 14, 15, &c. a Acts x.

A. St. Peter declared that as God had accepted the Gentile converts, by giving them the Holy Ghost as well as the Jews, the yoke of the Jewish rites ought not to be laid on them. But he afterwards, by his conduct, sanctioned the prejudices of the Judaizing Christians; for which he was severely rebuked by St. Paul.[b]

Q. How was St. Peter preserved from the cruel designs of Herod?

A. When St. Peter was put in prison by the command of Herod, and strictly guarded by soldiers, and secured in chains, God was pleased to hear the fervent prayers of the Church in his behalf. The night before his intended execution, the angel of the Lord came unto him, roused him from sleep, knocked off his chains, and conducted him to a place of safety. In the morning Herod was so exasperated with the keepers of the prison, that he commanded them to be put to death.

Q. Where did St. Peter afterwards bestow his Apostolical labours?

A. After this wonderful miracle wrought for his preservation, it is said St. Peter fled to Antioch, preached the Gospel in that city, and was the first Bishop of that Church.[c] He afterwards preached the Gospel to the Jews dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Asia. Towards the latter end of his life, and in the reign of Nero, he settled at Rome, where he preached the Gospel to the Jews, being the Apostle of the circumcision, and where he defeated the arts of the impostor Simon Magus.

Q. When did St. Peter suffer martyrdom?

A. St. Peter suffered martyrdom about the year of Christ sixty-nine, under Nero. The manner of his death was by crucifixion, with his head downwards. He affirmed that he was unworthy to suffer in the same posture wherein his Lord had suffered before him.

Q. Was not St. Peter a married man?

A. The primitive fathers have generally ranked Peter among the married Apostles; as the scriptures make mention of his wife's mother.[d]

Q. What are the writings of this Apostle?

A. This Apostle has left two Epistles addressed to the Jewish converts who were scattered through Pontus, Galatia, &c.[e] The principal design of the first Epistle is to com-

[b] Gal. ii. 11, &c.
[c] Euseb. His. Eccle. lib. iii. c. 1.
[d] Matt. viii. 14.
[e] 1 Pet. i. 1.

fort and confirm them under those "fiery trials" and "manifold temptations" to which they were then subject;[f] and to direct and instruct them how to behave themselves in the several states and relations of the civil and the Christian life;[g] that they might not be engaged in those rebellions against Cesar that were then fomented among the Jews, and might stop the mouths of those who spake against them as evil doers. In the second Epistle he prosecutes the same subject, to prevent their "apostacy" from the "faith," their "turning away from the holy commandment," and their "falling from their own steadfastness," by reason of the persecutions which assailed them.[h] He guards them also against the corrupt principles of the sect of the Gnostics, who turned "the grace of God into lasciviousness;" and also against those "scoffers" at the promise of Christ's coming, as if it would never be verified.

Q. What instruction may we derive from the celebration of this festival?

A. The superior love and affection which St. Peter manifested for his Master, which led him to expose himself to the greatest hazards, should inflame our hearts with the most sincere and lively love for our divine Master: the most elevated and supreme affection is due to him who saves us from death eternal, and bestows on man an inheritance immortal and undefiled. The sad instance of human infirmity in Peter's denial of his Master, and the contrition which he afterwards manifested, should lead us not only, after his example, to bewail our follies and transgressions, but always to be on our guard against temptation, and not to depend too much on our own strength, lest we provoke God to humble us by withdrawing from us his grace.

Q. When may we be said to rely too much on our own strength?

A. We discover self-confidence and presumption when we neglect those means of grace which are established in order to enable us to discharge our duty; when we rush into temptations, presuming upon our own capacity to encounter them; when, in those trials which the providence of God brings upon us, we trust more to our own resolution than his divine assistance, and, consequently, remit that watchfulness and prayer which are so necessary to secure us; when we do not avoid those situations which, by fatal expe-

[f] 1 Pet. iv. 12. i. 6. [g] 1 Pet. ii. 12—23. [h] 2 Pet. ii. 21. iii. 17.

rience, we have found fatal to our virtue; and when we are not suspicious of our own hearts, of their weakness and corruption, which make us so prone to be overcome when we are assaulted by temptation.

Q. What are the bad effects of this self-confident temper?

A. This self-confident temper often leads us to undertake what we have neither capacity nor ability to perform: it makes us neglect those previous precautions which are necessary to insure success in what we undertake; and it frequently provokes God to withdraw his grace, on which we place so little value.

Q. What considerations should we apply in order to subdue this self-confident temper?

A. In order to subdue this self-confident temper, we should consider the weakness and frailty of our own nature, how unable we are of ourselves to do any thing that is good. We should reflect how many men, eminent for piety and virtue, from too great confidence in themselves, have fallen into sin. We should, therefore, always earnestly pray for the aids of divine grace to direct and strengthen us. On this divine grace, while at the same time we are diligent and watchful, we should humbly depend, remembering that "our sufficiency is of God."

CHAPTER XL.

ST. JAMES *the* APOSTLE, *July* 25.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT account do you give of St. James the apostle?

A. St. James the apostle, commonly surnamed the Great, either for his age, or some peculiar honour conferred on him by Christ, was a Galilean, born probably at Bethsaida or Capernaum. He was the son of Zebedee, an eminent fisherman at those places.[1] He was brother to St. John, and they both had the honour of being related to our blessed Saviour; their mother Mary, named Salome, being either sister or cousin-german to the blessed Virgin.

[1] Matt. iv. 21.

Q. How was St. James called to be an apostle?

A. St. James diligently applied himself to his father's trade. And as he, with his brother, was one day fishing in the sea of Galilee, our Saviour passing along the shore, called to them to follow him, and to be his disciples, promising to make them fishers of men. This command they readily obeyed, and left not only their employment, but their father Zebedee, with his servants and ship, and became constant attendants upon Christ in his ministry.[j]

Q. What new name was conferred by our Saviour on St. James and his brother St. John?

A. After our Saviour had admitted them into this intimate union, he surnamed them Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder;[k] thereby signifying the victorious and resistless power of their preaching, and the profound and impressive strain in which they should teach the great mysteries of the Gospel.

Q. Was there not something in the temper of these apostles that might give occasion to this title?

A. The natural warmth of temper in these apostles, which particularly appeared in their zeal to destroy those Samaritans who refused to receive our Saviour because he was going to Jerusalem,[l] might give occasion to the title that was bestowed on them.

Q. What was probably the reason that the Samaritans refused to our Saviour the common acts of hospitality?

A. The Samaritans lived in the greatest enmity with all the Jews; and our Saviour seemed to slight mount Gerizim, the solemn place of their worship, "his face being as though he would go to Jerusalem."[m] After the tribe of Judah had returned from the captivity of Babylon, and the temple of Jerusalem was rebuilt, the Jews were, by a solemn covenant, obliged to put away their heathen wives.[n] But Sanballat, governor of Samaria, having married his daughter to Manasses, a Jewish priest, who was unwilling to put away his wife, excited the Samaritans to build a temple upon mount Gerizim, near the city of Samaria, in opposition to the temple at Jerusalem, and made his son-in-law, Manasses, priest there. Thus was the foundation laid of an irreconcileable difference between the Jews and Samaritans; which, in process of time, grew so great, that they would not so much as show common civility to one another.

j Matt. iv. 21, &c. *k* Mark iii. 17. *l* Luke ix. 54.
m Luke ix. 51. *n* Joseph. Antiq. lib. ii. c. 8.

Q. Did not our Saviour rebuke the intemperate zeal of these apostles?

A. Our Saviour rebuked the intemperate zeal of these apostles, as being contrary to the meek spirit of the Gospel, and his design of coming into the world; which was to save men's lives, by establishing a religion that not only consults their eternal salvation, but their temporal peace and security.[o]

Q. Did not the apostles St. James and St. John manifest also an ambitious temper?

A. The apostles, during the life of the Saviour, seemed to entertain the erroneous idea, that their Master would soon declare himself, what they supposed their Messiah must certainly be, a temporal prince. Under the influence of this erroneous expectation, St. James and St. John prompted their mother to request of Christ, that her two sons might be the most considerable persons in his kingdom, and have the nearest places to his person.[p]

Q. Did not our Saviour correct this ambitious disposition?

A. Christ soon made them sensible of the rashness of their demand, by telling them, that in his kingdom the highest place would be for those who underwent the greatest troubles and sufferings; and that the dignities of his kingdom would be dispensed to them for whom they were prepared by the Father.

Q. How did our Saviour calm the passions of the rest of the disciples, who were offended at this request?

A. Our Saviour silenced the rising resentment of the other disciples, by instructing them in the humble and self-denying nature of his kingdom; and by exciting them to imitate his example, who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

Q. What became of St. James after our Saviour's ascension?

A. St. James preached the Gospel in Judea and Samaria; and, by the command of Herod, being seized at Jerusalem, he there suffered martyrdom, being the first apostle who laid down his life for the testimony of Jesus.

Q. What instruction does this festival afford us?

A. The humble calling which St. James and his family followed, at the time he was chosen by Christ to be his disciple, should teach us, that the blessing of God attends

[o] Luke ix. 55, 56. [p] Matt. xx. 20, &c

all those who depend upon his providence, in the diligent and faithful discharge of the duties of their station. The readiness with which St. James forsook his father, to follow Christ, should teach us, that no worldly considerations, not even the ties of nature, should come in competition with the express commands of God. The rebuke which the intemperate zeal of the apostles received from our Saviour should teach us, that no difference of religion, nor pretence of zeal for God and Christ, can warrant and justify a fierce, vindictive, and exterminating spirit; but that we ought, on the contrary, to treat all who differ from us with mildness and affability, and while we steadfastly adhere to our principles, to cherish a spirit of mutual kindness and charity; and, finally, from the example of St. James and the other apostles and saints who laid down their life for Christ, we should learn to estimate the distinguished privilege and blessedness of those who, in the service of the Saviour, suffered martyrdom.

Q. What do you mean by a martyr?

A. A martyr is one who bears witness to the truth with the sacrifice of his own life. Those who suffered imprisonment, the spoil of their goods, banishment, and severe tortures, if they escaped without dying, were called Confessors. But it was necessary to "resist unto blood," to acquire the glorious privilege of a martyr; though those who died in prison, or during their sufferings by want, or in their banishment were killed by thieves or wild beasts, and even those who, administering to their fellow Christians, in the time of a plague, lost their life, were esteemed martyrs, and entitled to the privileges which were thought to belong to that state.

Q. What privileges were assigned to martyrs by the primitive Christians?

A. Among various other privileges which the primitive Christians assigned to martyrs, they supposed that martyrs, upon their death, were admitted immediately to the beatific vision, while other souls waited for the day of judgment before their happiness was completed; and the primitive Christians supposed that martyrdom supplied the grace conveyed both by baptism and the holy eucharist, and entitled men to the benefit of those sacraments, the remission of their sins.

Q. Is it not a duty, and should it not be considered as a privilege, to sacrifice life sooner than renounce the service of God?

A. We should consider it as a duty and a privilege to em brace martyrdom sooner than renounce our allegiance to God In so doing, we prefer eternal happiness before the short-live pleasures of the world; we evidence the highest love to ou God and Saviour, and the most unbounded submission to hi will; and becoming thus conformed to our Master's suffer ings, we acquire a title to a higher degree of glory than wil be the portion of other Christians.[q]

Q. How did the primitive Christians generally embrac martyrdom?

A. The primitive Christians generally embraced martyr dom with great readiness and cheerfulness, rejoicing tha they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ And not only the clergy, but the laity, women as well as men young and old, encountered death with great fortitude; thoug it was armed with all the variety of torments that the malic and cruelty of their enemies could invent.

Q. To what causes may we attribute this great courag and resolution of the primitive Christians?

A. Next to the plentiful effusion of supernatural grace their great piety was a proper foundation for this Christia confidence. They mortified their sensual passions; they inured their bodies to severe hardships; they never softene themselves with the pleasures and diversions of the age They cherished a lively sense of the rewards of the next life with which the sufferings of the present life are not worth to be compared. Their minds were inflamed with great lov to their Lord and Master Jesus Christ, whose sufferings fo them were fresh in their memories. And the inspiring grac of God gave them such a lively sense of the glories and bles sings of heaven, that they endured, with triumph, the mos exquisite tortures, which they considered as passports t eternal bliss.

[q] Rev. vii. 13, 14, &c.; Matt. v 10.

CHAPTER XLI.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW, *August* 24.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT account does the sacred history give of St. Bartholomew?

A. The evangelical history takes very little notice of this apostle, more than the bare mention of his name; though it is thought that he is the person called Nathanael, principally from the circumstance that St. John never mentions Bartholomew, while he often speaks of Nathanael; and the other evangelists, though they mention Bartholomew, never take notice of Nathanael. It is supposed, therefore, that the same person is designated by these two names.

Q. What character did our Saviour give of him?

A. When Philip brought him to Christ, our Saviour characterized him as a man of true simplicity and integrity, "an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile."[r]

Q. Wherein appears the honest simplicity of this apostle?

A. He did not object against the Saviour, the meanness of his original, the low condition and poverty of his parents, but only against the supposed place of his birth, which according to the prophets, was to be Bethlehem, and not Nazareth, where he erroneously supposed Christ was born.[s] But popular prejudice did not so far blind him as to prevent him from inquiring concerning Christ, and from acknowledging him to be the Messiah.[t]

Q. What further account is there of this apostle?

A. Upon the dispersion, it is thought that this apostle preached the Gospel in Arabia Felix and the hither India, where, it is said by Eusebius, that St. Matthew's Gospel was found, left, as tradition reported, by St. Bartholomew. He afterwards travelled through the northern and western parts of Asia, through Lycaonia, and, at length, settled in Albanople, a city of the greater Armenia, where, endeavouring to reclaim the people from idolatry, he was seized by the governor; and after being fleed alive,[u] was crucified with his head downwards. This lingering and dreadful death he

[r] John i. 47. [s] John i. 46. [t] John i. 49 [u] Lib. v. c. 10.

cheerfully sustained, comforting and encouraging his Christian converts to the last moment of his life.

Q. What instruction does this festival convey to us?

A. From this festival we should learn the value of that simplicity and sincerity of character which this apostle displayed, and without which all professions of religion, and every external appearance of it, are empty and vain.

Q. Explain the virtue of sincerity as it respects our duty to God.

A. As it respects our duty to God, sincerity requires that the outward acts of uniform piety and obedience be the result of our internal veneration for him, and of lively and genuine affection for him. It implies that our faith in his word be entire, our hope in his promises firm, and that it be our supreme desire to recommend ourselves to his favour.

Q. Explain the virtue of sincerity as it respects our intercourse with others.

A. As it respects our intercourse with others, this virtue implies a simplicity of mind and manners in our conversation and conduct. It leads us to speak as we think, to act as we profess, to perform what we promise, and really to be what we would appear to be.

Q. What are the best means of attaining this virtue of sincerity?

A. A constant intercourse with God in the exercises of devotion is the most effectual means of exciting and preserving this virtue of sincerity. We should also cherish a constant sense of the presence and inspection of that Almighty Being, who will bring to light every secret thing; who requires the service of the heart; and who will detect, and expose to everlasting scorn and punishment, the vain pretences of the hypocrite.

CHAPTER XLII.

ST. MATTHEW, *September* 21.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT account is given of the apostle St. Matthew?

A. St. Matthew, who is also named Levi,[v] was an Hebrew of the Hebrews; and was probably a Galilean. His occupation was that of a publican,[w] or toll-gatherer to the Romans; an office which, though at first esteemed highly honourable, became, at last, highly odious, on account of the great extortion practised by those who held it.

Q. How did the Jews express their abhorrence of those who held the office of a publican?

A. The Jews accounted it unlawful to do the publicans any act of kindness. Money received from them could not be put to the rest of a man's estate, as it was supposed to be got by violence. They were not only deprived of all communion in divine worship, but shunned in all affairs of civil society; it being esteemed infamous and unlawful to marry into their families. Publicans and sinners were considered as synonymous terms.

Q. How was St. Matthew called to be a disciple?

A. As St. Matthew was sitting by the sea of Galilee, gathering the duties payable on merchandise and the tribute from the passengers, our Saviour happened to pass by, and, according to his usual manner of calling disciples, bade St. Matthew to follow him.[x]

Q. Did St. Matthew readily obey the call?

A. St. Matthew, who could not entirely be a stranger to the character of Christ, since he lived at Capernaum, the usual place of Christ's residence, where his miracles and sermons were frequent, immediately left his rich and gainful employment to encounter the poverty and hardships which would assail him in the service of Christ. To show his satisfaction in becoming the disciple of Christ, he went home and prepared a dinner to entertain our Saviour and his disciples; inviting all his friends, particularly those of his own profession, piously hoping that they might also be benefited by Christ's instructions and example.

v Luke v. 27. w Matt. x. 3. x Matt. ix. 9.

Q. What became of St. Matthew after our Saviour's ascension?

A. St. Matthew continued with the rest of the disciples till our Saviour's ascension, and then, for about eight years, he preached in Judea; and afterwards he travelled into Parthia and Ethiopia, where he converted multitudes to Christianity. It is most probable he suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, though the manner of his death is altogether uncertain

Q. What writings has St. Matthew left behind him?

A. St. Matthew has left the Gospel that goes under his name. He was qualified to write a history of our Saviour, as he was an eye-witness of the life and actions of Christ, and could have no inducement to deceive or mislead. This Gospel, which, it is supposed, was originally written in Hebrew, and afterwards translated into Greek, was written by St. Matthew about eight years after the death of Christ, for the particular use of the Jewish converts.

Q. What instruction does this festival afford?

A. The mercy and condescension of Christ in choosing for one of his most intimate friends and companions a despised publican, should teach us that God will accept and pardon the worst of sinners, if they will forsake their evil ways, and become obedient to the calls and invitations of divine grace. The readiness with which St. Matthew obeyed this call, and the humble and self denying spirit which he discovered, should excite us cheerfully to renounce all worldly pleasures and advantages in the service of our divine Master, and especially to repress that inordinate love of riches, which invariably withdraws our affections from God and his service.

Q. Wherein consists the nature of covetousness?

A. Covetousness consists in an immoderate love of riches, leading to an eager and insatiable pursuit of them, and often to unlawful and dishonest means of acquiring them. It leads us to hoard up our wealth, neither employing it for our own enjoyment, nor for the good of others.

Q. Is not covetousness a most odious and injurious passion?

A. The inordinate love of wealth alienates the mind from God, and withdraws the attention of men from the care of their souls. It hardens the heart to the sentiments of piety, to the influences of divine grace, to the calls of benevolence; and it is the parent of almost all the fraud and injustice, cruelty and oppression, falsehood and perjury, that are committed in the world.

Q. Is not covetousness a most unreasonable vice?

A. Covetousness is an insatiable passion, which is never gratified, which can never attain the contentment and happiness at which it aims. It mistakes too the nature of happiness; for this is seldom to be found in abundance of wealth, but in such a competency as is adequate to the conveniences and comforts of life. "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

Q. What are the best means to overcome this passion?

A. We should consider the uncertainty and the unsatisfying nature of that wealth at which we aim, and should therefore repress all immoderate solicitude for it. Seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, we should rest satisfied, that while faithful and diligent in a course of honest industry, all things necessary to our worldly comfort the good providence of God will confer upon us. We should propose to ourselves higher objects of pursuit than any which the world can afford, even those pleasures which are at God's right hand, in whose presence there is fulness of joy. These we should earnestly desire; these should be the objects of our most vigorous pursuit. And mindful that we must render, at the awful tribunal of heaven, an account of our stewardship, we should take care so to employ our wealth in useful and benevolent purposes, that it may minister to our joy, and not to our shame at the last great day.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ST. MICHAEL, *and* ALL ANGELS, *September* 29.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT account do the Scriptures give of St. Michael?

A. The Scriptures inform us that St. Michael was an archangel, who presided over the Jewish nation, as other archangels did over the Gentile world;[v] that he had an army of angels under his command, with whom he fought with the dragon, or Satan, and his angels;[z] and that, contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses.[a]

v Daniel x. 13. z Rev. xii. 7. a Jude 9

Q. What does the fight mentioned in the Revelation, of St. Michael and his angels, with the dragon and his angels, most probably signify?

A. It is generally supposed that it denotes some eminent victory of the Christian Church, by the assistance of these ministering spirits, over the power and malice of the devil and his angels, who set themselves, with all their force, to persecute and destroy the Church.

Q. What is supposed to be meant by the contest about the body of Moses?

A. It is thought by some* that the controversy about the body of Moses relates to the controversy about rebuilding the Jewish temple and worship; and that this may, in a figurative sense, be as fitly styled the body of Moses, as the Christian Church is called the body of Christ. In support of this supposition it is urged, that the passage of St. Jude is cited from Zechariah;† where the rebuilding the temple is treated of. Others‡ interpret this passage in a literal sense, and are of opinion, that St. Michael, by the order of God, hid the body of Moses after his death, and that the devil endeavoured to discover it, as a fit means to entice the people to idolatry by the worship of the body of him whom they so much venerated.

Q. What is meant by the term *angel?*

A. The term *angel*, in general, signifies no more than a messenger or ambassador employed upon the errand of another; but in Scripture, and in common way of speaking, it is taken for a celestial spirit, employed as a messenger to execute the commission of God.

Q. What proof is there of the existence of angels?

A. The clear and express testimony of Scripture, which gives us an account of their appearance to patriarchs and holy men of old, establishes, beyond a doubt, the existence and ministry of angels.

Q. What do you observe concerning the nature of angels?

A. Though some of the ancient philosophers and the primitive fathers attributed to angels bodies which they called ethereal, it is the most current opinion of the Christian Church, and seems most agreeable to Scripture, that angels are pure spirits, invisible and imperceptible to our senses. It appears, however, from Scripture, that they have a power to assume light and airy bodies, and to appear in a human shape.

* Dr. Hammond. † Zech. iii. ‡ Archbishop Tillotson.

Q. What are the properties ascribed to angels?

A. Angels are described in Scripture as endowed with great understanding and power, much superior to what is possessed by man. They are said to excel in strength, in knowledge, and in wisdom; and in purity and holiness; whence the title *holy angels* are given to them.[c] They are represented as full of wings, to denote the great swiftness and activity of their motions. And their office consists in constantly attending upon the great and glorious King of heaven and earth, expecting his commands, and ready to execute his will.

Q. Wherein consists the ministry of good angels?

A. We are taught that angels are employed by God to accomplish the designs of his providence, to declare his counsels and will to his Church. By angels most of the divine messages were conveyed to the prophets; and the birth of John the Baptist, the conception of the blessed Virgin, and the birth and resurrection of Christ, were announced by angels.[d] We are taught also, that they are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation;"[e] to protect and succour, to comfort, assist, and direct those who, by sincere repentance and faith in Christ, labour to approve themselves to their heavenly Master.

Q. What has been the general opinion of mankind concerning guardian angels?

A. It has been an opinion generally received among Jews and Christians, and Pagans also, that every man has a guardian angel appointed him by God, to take a special care of him and his concerns, both temporal and spiritual. Abraham seems to countenance this opinion, when he says to his steward, "The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way."[f] David seems of the same opinion, when he says, "The angel of the Lord encampeth about those who fear him."[g] Our Saviour seems to refer to this truth in these words, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," these humble believers, "for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven."[h] And, as was before mentioned, their being "sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation," supposes them ready to do all good offices to good men.

c Psal. ciii. 20; 2 Sam. xiv. 17, 20; Matt. xxv. 31
d Luke i. 13, 31: ii. 10. e Heb. i. 14. f Gen. xxiv. 40
g Psal. xxxiv. 7. h Matt. xviii. 10.

Q. What are the particular offices of good angels towards good men?

A. Good angels not only protect and deliver good men from outward dangers and evils, but also suggest to them good thoughts and affections, and excite them to good works and actions. When evil angels assail believers by temptations, the good angels are ready to succour and strengthen them, that they sink not under these temptations. At the awful hour of death they stand by the faithful, ready to comfort and assist them, and to receive and conduct their souls to the mansions of the blessed. And, finally, when the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory to judge the world, the holy angels shall attend him; and he shall send them to gather his chosen and faithful people, from one end of heaven to the other.

Q. Wherein consists the ministry of bad angels?

A. Bad angels are employed in trying and exercising the righteous; in punishing the wicked, and in executing vengeance upon them in another world.[1] They set themselves in opposition to the glory of God and the salvation of mankind; though they are restrained in the exercise of their power.

Q. Ought we to implore the intercession and prayers of good angels?

A. We have no authority from scripture for imploring the intercession and prayers of good angels. The scripture directs us to the mediation alone of Christ Jesus, "the only mediator between God and man." To implore the aid of any other intercessors in heaven, but him, would derogate from the efficacy of his all-prevailing intercession. To address our prayers to angels and departed saints, supposes that they hear us; of course, as all men are equally bound to address these prayers to them, they must be every where present; and we thus blasphemously ascribe to them an attribute of divinity. The worship of angels and saints, and of their images, as practised in the Church of Rome, is certainly the most criminal idolatry; for it is at the time, in the place, in the posture, and with every other circumstance of divine worship; and they are addressed in the same prayers that are offered up to God and the blessed Redeemer! This worship is severely reproved by St. Paul: "Let no man deceive you in a voluntary humility and worshipping of an-

[1] Job i. and ii. Rev. ii. 10. 1 Sam. xvi. 14. 1 Kings xxii. 20. &c.

gels."[j] and the worship of images is directly contrary to the second commandment.

Q. Why does the Church celebrate this festival?

A. The Church celebrates this festival in order to express her thankfulness to God for the many eminent advantages she and her faithful members enjoy from the ministry and assistance of good angels.

Q. What instruction does this festival afford?

A. It should be a subject of lively gratitude to God, and it should inspire the most elevated confidence, that he has appointed the highest order of his creatures, his pure and blessed spirits, to minister to our temporal and spiritual welfare; to guide us through life; support us in death; and convey us to his kingdom of glory. And since these holy angels constantly observe our conduct, we should ever act under the impression that we are surrounded by the most exalted and glorious society; and we should therefore be excited to holy awe, and to circumspection, and vigilance in all our conduct. We should also be excited to imitate these blessed spirits in their ready, active, and zealous obedience to the commands of their God; and, like them, to condescend to the most humble services for the good of others, and especially to advance the eternal salvation of mankind. And, lastly, we should endeavour to secure to ourselves the ministry of good angels, their protection, aid, and support, by continuing holy and faithful members of the Church; in communion with which only we can enjoy the confidence that we are "heirs of salvation."

Q. What may we learn from the behaviour of St. Michael, when he disputed with the devil concerning the body of Moses?

A. It is said, (Jude 9.) that St. Michael, disputing with the devil concerning the body of Moses, durst not bring a railing accusation against him. From this behaviour of St. Michael we may learn the duty of avoiding the sin of evil speaking, the seed of all evil, and the pest of society.

Q. Wherein consists the nature of evil speaking?

A. Evil speaking consists in divulging any evil which we know concerning our neighbour, whether true or false, whereby his good name is impaired. We may be guilty of this sin by our actions as well as by our words; for significant looks or gestures, will often excite or sanction injurious surmises

[j] Col. ii. 18.

concerning others: and silence itself, if it be affected or mysterious may be as effectual as the most envenomed satire. If the charges which we bring against any man be false, or doubtful and uncertain, it is calumny or slander. If the evidence on which we proceed be insufficient, it is rash judgment. And a proneness to blame, or censure others, is called censoriousness.

Q. Is it never allowable to expose the faults of our neighbour which we know to be true?

A. It may be sometimes a duty to expose those faults of another which we know to be true; in order to prevent other people from being deceived or injured by him; to check his dangerous influence in society; and to fix on vice that indignation which is her just due. But the faults which we thus expose should not be merely occasional or trivial, but radical and important; and our motive in exposing them should be to do good, and not to indulge an uncharitable, envious, or censorious temper. Except when some good purpose is to be answered, we ought not to expose even the real faults of others; because we would be unwilling that all our own infirmities and errors should be exposed to public view. Real benevolence would lead to cover and to conceal, as far as justice and truth will permit, the trivial faults of others; and even their more serious errors, if only the result of sudden temptation and not of radical depravity.

Q. How is the vice of evil speaking condemned in scripture?

A. The scriptures rank evil speaking among the most heinous and infamous vices. "Out of the heart," says Christ, "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, false witness, evil speakings."[k] St. Paul ranks backbiters among those who are "given up to a reprobate mind," and who, in the judgment of God, "are worthy of death."[l] The same Apostle puts slanderers and revilers among those who shall not "inherit the kingdom of God;"[m] and when he reckons up the sins of the last times, evil speakers are in the list of that black catalogue.[n] St. Peter joins evil speakers with malice, hypocrisy, and envy—hateful vices which we must lay aside entirely, if we desire to advance in spiritual grace and knowledge.[o] And St. James assures us, that, however high his pretences are to religion, the religion of that man is vain who "bridleth not his tongue."[p]

k Matt. xv. 19. l Rom. i. 29, 30, 32. m 1 Cor. vi. 10.
n 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3. o 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. p James i. 26.

Q. Is not the vice of evil speaking a dishonourable and heinous vice?

A. The vice of evil speaking robs our neighbour of what is dearer to him than life, his good name and reputation. It is a violation of that excellent rule of justice, "of doing to others as we wish they should do to us;" and of that Christian charity which is so forcibly enjoined on us by Christ, and which is the distinguishing badge of his disciples. It discovers a weak and little mind, which is not able to bear the lustre of merit and virtue. To delight in wounding the reputation of others, is an evidence of a most unworthy and cruel disposition.

Q. What are the disguises under which this vice is often concealed?

A. This vice sometimes cloaks itself under the appearance of friendship, and ushers in its censures by commendations and praises. Sometimes it counterfeits a lively zeal for the glory of God; a compassionate sense of the faults of our neighbour; a love of justice; and a violent and just sorrow for the dishonour cast on religion and virtue. When these are the real motives which lead us to expose for good and necessary purposes the faults of others, they justify our conduct: but when they are only the pretences under which we conceal an envious, malicious, and revengeful temper, so far from justifying, they aggravate the crime of evil speaking.

Q. May we not, by encouraging this vice in others, become partakers of the guilt of it ourselves?

A. If we feel pleasure or satisfaction at hearing the faults of others unjustly or unnecessarily exposed; if we do not endeavour, by every prudent method, to interrupt or check censorious conversation concerning others; if we do not seek to palliate and extenuate, as far as truth will allow us, their faults, and to bring forward all their virtues and good actions in order to lessen the force of even the just censure that may be cast upon them; we incur the same guilt as if, from mean and unworthy motives, we actually exposed the faults of others; or as if we unjustly detracted from their reputation and good name.

Q. How may we conquer a propensity to speak evil of others?

A. We shall effectually conquer a propensity to speak evil of others, if we are careful to subdue the passions which excite and nourish this propensity—our pride, which falsely

persuades us that we exalt ourselves by debasing others, our envy, which makes us look upon the happiness of others with an evil eye, and excites us to disturb it; and our impertinent curiosity, which is always meddling with what does not concern us. And in order to conquer this criminal and prevalent propensity, we should firmly resolve never to expose the faults of others, except when those faults are great and heinous; and when, at the same time, some good end is certainly to be answered by making them known.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ST. LUKE *the* EVANGELIST, *October* 18.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *do you mean by an Evangelist?*

A. The name Evangelist was at first given to those who preached the Gospel; but afterwards it was confined to those four who wrote the history of the life and preaching of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Q. What account do you give of the Evangelist St. Luke?

A. St. Luke was born at Antioch,[q] the metropolis of Syria, a city celebrated for its academies and schools, and for its eminent professors of all arts and sciences. Here the Evangelist St. Luke was educated from his childhood, and enriched with all kinds of human learning. He afterwards visited the chief academies of Asia and Greece; and then applied himself to the study of physic, in which art he became eminent. He was also celebrated for his skill in painting

Q. By whom was St. Luke converted, and whom did he constantly attend?

A. St. Luke was probably converted by St. Paul at Antioch. He was the constant and inseparable companion of St. Paul;[r] who entertained a great affection for him, owning him for his fellow labourer, calling him the beloved physician, and the brother whose praise is in the Gospel. He went with St. Paul to Rome, where he attended him in his sickness, and discharged some of those ministerial duties which the Apostle was prevented from discharging by his confinement. He was

[q] Euseb. lib. iii. chap. 4. [r] Acts xvi. 10 &c

particularly employed in carrying messages to those Churches where St. Paul had planted the Gospel. It is supposed that he left St. Paul at Rome, and travelled through Greece, Egypt, &c. But the more probable supposition is, that he did not entirely leave St. Paul till he had finished his course in martyrdom The place and the manner of St. Luke's death are uncertain.

Q. What account do you give of the Gospel written by St. Luke?

A. St. Luke wrote his Gospel in Achaia, by the assistance of St. Paul, principally with a view to record many particulars relating to the Saviour which the other Evangelists had passed over. It is dedicated to Theophilus, who was probably some magistrate of Achaia, who was converted and baptized by St. Luke.

Q. What account do you give of the Acts of the Apostles which were written by St. Luke?

A. The Acts of the Apostles were written by St. Luke at Rome, while he was there attending on St. Paul in his imprisonment. In this history he relates the actions and sufferings of some of the chief Apostles, particularly St. Paul.

Q. What are the characteristics of St. Luke's style?

A. St. Luke's manner of writing greatly excels that of the other writers of the sacred history. His style is polite and elegant, sublime and expressive; yet clear and perspicuous. He comes up to the character of a true historian, being faithful in his narrations, and elegant in his expressions.

Q. What instruction may we derive from the observation of this festival?

A. We should rejoice in those glad tidings of salvation proclaimed to the world by this holy Evangelist; and it should be our supreme care and aim to obtain an interest in this great salvation. From the advantage which St. Luke received from the learning of Antioch, we should be impressed with the necessity and importance of human literature as a powerful auxiliary to divine truth. From the pains which this Evangelist took to instruct his friend Theophilus in the truths of the Gospel, we should learn to consider it as one of the most sacred duties to advance the spiritual welfare of those dear to us. The attendance of St. Luke on the aged Apostle Paul, during his confinement and persecutions at Rome, should teach us the duty of assisting and comforting our fellow Christians in their distress and persecution; by praying to God to succour and console

them; by vindicating them from the assaults of calumny and slander; and by endeavouring to supply their necessities. They are members of the same spiritual body with ourselves in which, "if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it."[r] They are redeemed by the same common Saviour who "being rich, for our sakes became poor."[s] These considerations should urge us to seek to comfort and relieve them. We are also liable to the same afflictions which assail them; and therefore we should "remember them that are in adversity, as being ourselves also in the body."[t]

CHAPTER XLV.

ST. SIMON *and* ST. JUDE, *October* 28.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHAT *account is given of St. Simon?*

A. St. Simon the Apostle was born, as some suppose, at Cana of Galilee, for which reason they conclude he was surnamed the Canaanite. But others, with more probability, derive that name from *Kanah*, which signifies the same as Ζηλωτης, *zealot;* St. Simon having received this appellation from his great zeal for the honour of the Christian faith. But others again are of opinion, that he received this name from a particular sect among the Jews called *zealots*, who professed a great zeal for the honour of God; which zeal afterwards degenerated into licentiousness and extravagance, and became the occasion of great miseries to their own nation. St. Simon having preached the Gospel in Egypt and Africa, and it is supposed in Britain, at last suffered martyrdom.

Q. What account is given of St. Jude?

A. St. Jude the Apostle is reckoned among the number of the brethren of our Lord, being the son of Joseph, and brother of James, Bishop of Jerusalem. He is called in scripture Libbæus, denoting prudence and understanding; and also Thaddeus, signifying a person zealous in praising God.

Q. What is particularly recorded of St. Jude at our Lord's last Supper?

A. At our Lord's last Supper, when he was declaring what

[r] 1 Cor. xii. 26. [s] 2 Cor. viii. 9. [t] Heb. xiii. 3. [u] Luke vi 15

particular manifestations he would make of himself to his disciples after his resurrection, St. Jude asked him what was the reason he would "manifest himself to them and not to the world."[w]

Q. How does our Saviour answer St. Jude's inquiry?

A. To this inquiry of St. Jude, our Saviour answered, that because the world had no respect for him or his doctrine, therefore they should not enjoy the happiness of his presence. But since they who had been his constant disciples had showed their love to him, by obeying his laws, and attending upon his person, he would reward them, by revealing himself to them, who were to be the witnesses of his resurrection to the world.

Q. Where did St. Jude exercise his ministry?

A. It is most probable that St. Jude preached in Judea, Galilee, and the neighbouring countries, and at last suffered martyrdom in Persia.

Q. What are the writings of this Apostle?

A. St. Jude left only one Epistle, which, though addressed to all Christians at large, is supposed to have been chiefly intended for the converted Jews in their several dispersions. He exhorts them, with firm, yet mild and gentle zeal, to defend "the faith once delivered to the saints," and to oppose the false teachers who were corrupting it.

Q. Since zeal is a great Christian virtue, to which we are excited by the example of these and the other Apostles, explain the nature of zeal.

A. Zeal is an earnest concern in favour of or against some truth or object; which concern leads to the eager pursuit of the truth or object, or to an eager opposition to it. Like the other passions, it is in its own nature indifferent, and is either good or bad, according to the object or degree of it.[x] It is used in scripture in a good sense, when it is considered as exercised on those things which relate to the honour of God, and the salvation of the souls of men. And it is used in a bad sense, when applied to a furious spirit of persecution, and such contentions and divisions as produce wrath and ungovernable passions.[y]

Q. Describe that zeal which may be considered as a Christian virtue.

A. The zeal which is a Christian virtue should be right in regard to its object; that for which we contend should be

w John xiv. 22.
x 2 Cor. ix. 2. Tit. ii. 14.
y Acts xiii. 45. xvii. 5. Gal. v. 19, &c. Rom. x. 2.

some certain and important good, and that which we oppose some certain and important evil. The degree of it should be in proportion to the good or evil of the things on which it is exercised. And our zeal should be restrained to the use of lawful and justifiable means; for no zeal for God and his glory, for his true Church and religion, will justify the use of any means that are in themselves sinful.

Q. Where does our zeal become criminal?

A. Our zeal becomes criminal when it leads us violently to contend for any unimportant or erroneous doctrine; to violate any of the express institutions or laws of God, under the pretext of a concern for his glory; or to create divisions or schisms in the Church of Christ. And our zeal is criminal when it leads us to pursue and defend even truth, without the meekness and charity which are essential to the character of a true Christian.

Q. What are the considerations which should excite our zeal in the service of God?

A. The excellency of the divine nature, and the infinite bounty and goodness of God towards us; the wonderful condescension of the Son of God, who stooped so low to redeem us, and suffered so much to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; the great importance of the salvation of our souls, the weakness of our nature, and the strength of temptation; all these considerations should animate our zeal in the service of our gracious God and Redeemer, and should awaken our most earnest and active exertions to secure our everlasting interests.

Q. Does zeal for God extenuate the immorality of any action?

A. Wicked actions, even if done from a sincere but erroneous zeal for God, expose us without repentance to his just wrath; for the nature of wicked actions is not altered by our persuasion concerning them. It may, however, extenuate a crime, and render the person who commits it less obnoxious to the severity of God's wrath, if he has acted from the convictions of an honest, though deluded conscience. It is a much greater fault to do that which we really believe contrary to our duty, than ignorantly to transgress when we are under the power of an erroneous conscience.

Q. How ought we to exert our zeal towards heretics and schismatics?

A. Our zeal against heretics and schismatics should be

xerted by earnest prayer to God for their conversion; that t would please him to bring into "the way of truth, all such is have erred and are deceived;" by acting towards them with such kindness and gentleness as may induce them calmly o listen to our arguments and remonstrances; and, at the same time, we should remain steadfast and decided in maintaining the truth, and should earnestly endeavour to convince those of their error, who reject the doctrines or authorized ministry of the Church.

CHAPTER XLVI.

ALL SAINTS' DAY, *November* 1.

A FESTIVAL.

Q. WHOM *does the Church this day commemorate?*

A. The Church has wisely set apart a day for the commemoration of those good and eminent Christians who have fought the good fight of faith, and been remarkably distinguished for their virtue and piety, and who are therefore properly called Saints. She celebrates on this day the virtues of those Saints who are militant here on earth, as well as the memories of those triumphant Saints who are now arrived at the haven of eternal repose, and who enjoy uninterrupted peace and happiness with their Lord and Saviour in the mansions of heaven.

Q. What was the design of the Church in instituting this festival?

A. The principal design of the Church in instituting this festival seems to be to honour God in the virtues and good examples of his Saints. For through the assistance of his grace they were made conformable to his will in this life, and through the unmerited mercy of the same gracious Lord, they are crowned with happiness hereafter. The Church also designs by this festival, to encourage us here below to run the race that is set before us; since we are "encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses," who have given the most illustrious evidence of their faith in God and constant adherence to his truth, and whose example should animate and encourage us.

Q. Does not the Church also, on this festival, remind us of the doctrine of "the Communion of Saints?"

A. The Church, on this festival, reminds us of the impor-

tant doctrine of "the Communion of Saints." By which doctrine is meant, that the Saints, or all true Christians, have, in common, one God, one Christ, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one hope; and that they communicate with one another in all duties of piety and charity, by mutual help or assistance in times of persecution, by mutual beneficence or liberality in time of want, and by mutual participation of one another's prayers.

Q. What communion have the Saints here below with the Saints above?

A. The Saints upon earth are called "fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God, of the same family with those in heaven."[z] We bless God for their good examples; we rejoice at their bliss; we give thanks for their labours of love; and pray that with them we may be partakers of the kingdom of heaven. And they rejoice at our conversion; they pray for our protection and final consummation and happiness.

Q. By what means did the Saints in heaven attain that happiness which they now enjoy?

A. Through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ the Saints attain the happiness of heaven, by the purity of their faith, by the sanctity of their lives, by their constancy and perseverance under all sufferings and persecutions, and by thus fighting manfully under Christ's banner, against sin, the world, and the devil, unto the end of their lives.

Q. In what consists the happiness of heaven?

A. God is pleased to condescend to our low apprehensions, and to describe the happiness of heaven, by comparing it to such objects as we admire and value most upon earth. It is accordingly represented under the images of a treasure, a crown, a kingdom; being styled, "a treasure that faileth not;"[a] "a treasure in heaven;"[b] "a crown of glory;"[c] "a crown of life;"[d] "a crown of righteousness;"[e] the "kingdom of the Father."[f] But the exalted excellence of this happiness is more particularly set forth to us under the expressions "everlasting life," "the vision of God," a "likeness to him," and "being with Christ." In the next life, the righteous shall be free from sin, the source of their distress and affliction in the present life; they shall be exempted from all those evils and miseries which are the consequences of

z Eph. ii. 19. iii. 15. a Luke xii. 33. b Matt. xix. 21.
c 1 Pet. v. 4. d Rev ii. 10. James i 12. e 2 Tim. iv. 8.
f Matt. xiii. 43.

sin, and which attend them in this earthly pilgrimage. And not only sin snd sorrow shall be banished from heaven; but the righteous shall there enter on the highest pleasures that they are capable of enjoying. Their understandings shall be enlightened with the knowledge of God, the most perfect and excellent Being, the source and fountain of all truth; their wills shall be vigorously employed in choosing and embracing God, the supreme good; and their affections shall be exercised upon him, the fountain of perfection and bliss. From the vision of the glory of God, from the admiration of his excellences, from the love of his perfections, we shall be transformed into his likeness, both in the purity and spirituality of our souls; and shall thus become partakers of the everlasting and ineffable bliss of God himself. To see our glorified Redeemer, him who has done and suffered so much for us—to see him face to face, exalted at the right hand of God; to share in the society of all the great and good men whom we have admired and loved, and of all those Christian friends with whom we have been connected in the strong ties of affection, will raise in us the highest transports of joy and pleasure. And the bliss of the righteous shall never have an end; through the ceaseless ages of eternity it will continue and increase; the praise and adoration of the ever blessed Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, will be the everlasting employment of the blessed in the kingdom above.

Q. How is the example of the Saints suited to our imitation?

A. The Saints were mere men, clothed with the same imperfect nature, and subject to the same unruly passions with ourselves, and were exposed to the same difficulties which now assail us. Since they obtained the victory over sin and temptation, the same victory is certainly attainable by us; for we have the same Almighty grace, the same divine promises, the same hallowed sacraments, to strengthen and console us, by which they were enabled to attain the exalted heights of holiness and virtue. The example of the Saints, therefore, by affording a lively exhibition of the excellence and beauty of virtue, and of its encouragements and rewards, tends powerfully to animate and assist us in our Christian course.

Q. Since example has so great influence, is it not of the first importance that we be careful in the choice of company?

A. Solomon has long since observed, that, "he that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but the companion of fools

shall be destroyed."[g] If we wish to make any progress in piety, we must frequent the society of those who are eminent examples of it; and avoid as much as possible the company of those who make a mock at sin. In the intercourse of the world, we must indeed too often associate with those whose conduct is not regulated by the principles of piety and virtue; but our intimate companions and friends should be those only who "adorn the doctrine of God in all things;" those who are sincere and upright Christians.

Q. Is it not the duty of the young especially, to pay particular regard to the choice of their company?

A. It is of importance that all good Christians should be particular in the choice of company. The contagion of vice is so powerful, that our greatest security consists in keeping at a distance from it; and the frailty of virtue is so great, that it is hazardous to expose it to the shock of temptation. But young persons ought to pay the most scrupulous attention to the choice of company. Their happiness, both temporal and eternal, depends in a great measure upon the company with whom they associate. The habits of virtue can only be acquired and strengthened by the imitation of good examples, by which also we shall be excited and strengthened to resist the allurements of vice. Vicious society and example will tend to weaken the sentiments of virtue, to lessen our abhorrence of vice, and to lead us on from one step to another, till, at last, we fearlessly pursue the career of vice and folly.

Q. What instruction may we derive from the observation of this festival?

A. We should be excited to bless God for the powerful aids and encouragements which he affords us in the practice of virtue, by the good examples of his Saints, whose memories we should honour, and whose piety and virtue we should thankfully commemorate. If we follow steadfastly the good example of those, "who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises," we shall be finally translated into their blest society, and be made partakers of their glorious rewards. "For if we have our fruit unto holiness, the end will be everlasting life."

[g] Prov. xiii. 20

CHAPTER XLVII.

EMBER DAYS.

FASTS.

Q. WHAT *are the Ember days?*

A. The Ember days are certain days set apart for consecrating to God the four seasons of the year; and for imploring his blessing, by fasting and prayer, upon the ordinations performed in the Church at those times. It was the practice of the Apostles, when they set apart persons for the work of the ministry, to pray and fast before they laid on their hands. It will become us, therefore, to address Heaven at this time after the same manner; that God would be pleased so to govern the minds of the Bishops, that they may admit none into holy orders but those who are duly qualified for the discharge of that sacred function; and that those who shall be ordained to serve at the altar, may, by their exemplary lives and zealous labours, turn many to righteousness.

Q. When are these Ember days observed in the Church?

A. The Ember days are observed at the four seasons of the year, being the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, after Whitsunday, after the fourteenth of September, and after the thirteenth of December. The Sundays immediately following these days being the stated times of ordination appointed by the Church.

Q. Why are these fasts called Ember days?

A. There have been many conjectures about the origin of this name. *Emb*, or *Embe*, in Saxon, signifies a *course* or *circuit; Embehtan*, to administer, and *Embehtman*, a minister. Ember weeks may, therefore, signify the periodical times for appointing ministers.

Q. Why was the ordination of ministers fixed at these seasons?

A. The ordination of ministers was perhaps fixed at these seasons, first, that as all the people are concerned in the ordaining of a fit clergy, so all may have an opportunity of joining in fasting and prayer for the direction and blessing of God; secondly, that both Bishops and Clergy, knowing the time, may prepare themselves for this great work; and, lastly, that

the people, knowing the times, may, if they please, be present, either to approve the choice made by the Bishop, or to object against those whom they know to be unworthy.*

CHAPTER XLVIII.

ALL FRIDAYS *in the* YEAR.

A FAST.

Q. WHAT *weekly fast is enjoyed by the Church?*

A. The Church enjoins as fasts all Fridays in the year, except Christmas day; which, though it fall upon a Friday, is celebrated as a day of rejoicing.

Q. Why was Friday celebrated as a day of fasting?

A. The primitive Church observed Friday as a fast in commemoration of our Saviour's sufferings, who was crucified on this day of the week. On no day can we with more propriety humble ourselves on account of our sins, than on that when the blessed Jesus humbled himself even to the death upon the cross for us, miserable sinners.

Q. In what manner should we observe this day?

A. We should on this day (as the Church directs us) use "such a measure of abstinence as is more especially suited to extraordinary acts and exercises of devotion." Besides attending the public prayers of the Church, we should enlarge our private devotions, and employ some part of the day in the serious examination of our hearts and lives, comparing them impartially with the laws of God, searching out and acknowledging our sins both of omission and commission.

Q. What are the considerations which should excite us to a thorough and impartial examination of ourselves?

A. When we are inquiring into the state of our minds, we should recollect that we are in the presence of God, to whom our most secret thoughts are open and naked; and therefore we should impartially compare our most secret sections by the standard of his laws; for though we may impose upon ourselves and others, we cannot devive an omniscient God. We should consider also that we must soon appear

* The substance of the chapters in the original work of Nelson, on the Ember days, will be found in the present work, in the preliminay instructions on the Church.

before the dreadful tribunal of God, to render an account of all our thoughts, words, and actions. And we should endeavour to escape the terrors of that awful trial, by frequently reviewing our hearts and lives, and confessing our sins to God, that we may obtain, by repentance, his mercy and favour, through the prevailing intercession of his Son Jesus Christ.

Q. In what manner should this examination be performed?

A. We should supplicate the grace of God to enlighten us in the knowledge of ourselves, to expose to us our own unworthiness and guilt. We should try ourselves by some of the leading principles and duties of religion—Whether we have frequent and serious thoughts of God—whether we view with lively gratitude and faith, the exalted plan of salvation through his Son Jesus Christ—whether we cherish firm and lively resolutions of obeying him—whether we constantly perform the duties of public and private worship, and serve God with diligence and devotion—whether we discharge faithfully the duties of that station in which we are placed, both in reference to the public and our own private families—whether we are active and zealous in doing all the good in our power to the bodies and souls of men—in short, whether the service of God be our supreme aim and highest enjoyment. We should also consider the several aggravations of our transgressions—whether they were committed against the light of our minds, with the free consent of our wills, and in despite of the checks of our own conscience—whether they have been often repeated, and are transient acts or settled habits. And we should carefully note the previous steps by which we have been led into sin, and the peculiar infirmity of our own character, that we may, for the future, be on our guard against temptation.

Q. Should we not engage in self-examination every evening?

A. We should every evening direct to our own consciences such inquiries as the following: How have we spent the day? What sins have we committed? What duties have we omitted? Have we regularly performed the duties of public and private devotion? Have we embraced every opportunity which offered of doing good? Has our intercourse with others been marked with candour and affability? Have we avoided the vices of evil-speaking and slander, the bane of society? Have we conducted our business with honesty

and fidelity? Have we improved usefully our leisure time? Have our relaxations and amusements been confined within the bounds of Christian moderation? What mercies have we received; and how thankful have we been for them? What temptations have we resisted? What progress have we gained in overcoming, through divine grace, our sinful passions? Have we this day cherished a constant sense of the presence and inspection of God, and lifted up our souls to him in devout gratitude, as our Creator, Benefactor, Preserver, and Redeemer?—Having thus reviewed the state of our minds and our conduct through the day, we should humbly supplicate the forgiveness of God for the sins which we have committed, and render him the glory and praise of all our good and virtuous actions. We should, through divine grace, resolve on better obedience for the future; and should make reparation to our neighbour for whatever injuries we have done him in his person, property, or character.

Q. What are the great advantages of frequent self-examination?

A. The frequent examination of our hearts and lives makes us thoroughly acquainted with ourselves, a knowledge of the greatest importance. It prompts us to repentance, as the only remedy for the guilt which, by our sins, we have contracted. It disposes us to humility, from a lively sense of our frequent errors and miscarriages. It keeps us in a state of constant preparation for death, by making us careful to avoid all sin, and by exciting us to the practice of those holy graces and virtues which will prepare us for heaven.

*** In addition to the foregoing Festivals and Fasts, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America has appointed the first Thursday in November (unless some other day be appointed by the civil authority) as a day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the fruits of the earth, and all other blessings of his merciful providence. And the Church has prescribed a solemn form of service for the day, every way calculated to excite the sentiments of devout and holy gratitude, and to give expression to them.

DEVOTIONS

FOR FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS,

SUITED TO THE

FEASTS AND FASTS OF THE CHURCH.

¶ The following Devotions may be used in *families*, in the way of responses, the persons present repeating audibly the parts printed in italics, while the master or mistress of the family, or some other person, repeats the other parts of the Devotion.

¶ All these Prayers may also be used by *individuals*, by changing the plural to the singular number.

¶ The following Introductory Devotions* may be used Morning and Evening *immediately before* the Family Prayers in the Prayer Book. But on Festivals and Fasts, instead of these Introductory Devotions, the Devotions appointed in this Book for those Festivals and Fasts may be used.

DAILY DEVOTIONS.

SUNDAY MORNING.

BEHOLD the angels assembled in their choirs, and the blessed saints ready with their hymns; behold the Church prepares her solemn offices, and summons all her children to bring in their praises.

Come, let us adore our God and Saviour.

The King of heaven himself invites us, and graciously calls us into his own presence; he bids us suspend our mean employments in the world, and enter his temple to hold sacred communion with him.

Come, let us adore our God and Saviour.

To him we owe all the days of our lives—at least let us devote this one to his service; a service so sweet and easy in itself, and so infinitely rich in its eternal rewards.

Come, let us adore our God and Saviour.

Let us cheerfully ascend to the house of our Lord, the place he has chosen for our sakes to dwell in; let us reverently bow before his holy altar, where he comes to meet us and our prayers.

Come, let us adore our God and Saviour.

SUNDAY EVENING.

VISIT, we beseech thee, O Lord, this habitation, and drive far away all snares of the enemy; let thy holy angels dwell

* Selected and altered from Hickes' Book of Devotions.

herein to preserve us in peace, and thy blessing be upon us for ever.

O our God and Saviour, accept the worship which we have this day rendered to thee.

Forsake us not in the vanishing of our days, but still continue to us thy gracious and fatherly protection; be thou our light and defence through this vale of misery and shadow of death, to that holy hill, where thy honour and our rest dwelleth.

O our God and Saviour, accept the worship which we have this day rendered to thee.

Give us the peace, and comfort, and communion of thy Holy Spirit, that our eyes may see thy salvation, and that we may rejoice in the felicity of thy chosen.

O our God and Saviour, accept the worship which we have this day rendered to thee.

Heartily joining in the worship and service of thy temple and Church on earth, may we, at last, be prepared for joining in the exalted and blissful services of thy temple and Church, eternal in the heavens.

O our God and Saviour, accept the worship which we have this day rendered to thee.

MONDAY MORNING AND EVENING.

LET us, with reverence, appear before our God, and humble ourselves in the presence of his glory; let us bring forth our psalms of praise, and sing with joy to our great Creator.

Come, let us adore our God who made us.

He made us, and not we ourselves, and he freely bestowed on us all the rest of his creatures; to engage our hearts to love his goodness, and to admire the riches of his infinite bounty.

Come, let us adore our God who made us.

Our bodies he framed of the dust of the earth, and gave us a soul after his own likeness; a soul which all created nature cannot fill, nor any thing below his own immensity.

Come, let us adore our God who made us.

For himself he made us, and for his glorious kingdom; that we might dwell with him in perfect bliss, and sing his praises for ever.

Come, let us adore our God who made us.

TUESDAY MORNING AND EVENING.

FROM thee, O Lord, we derive our being, and from the same goodness our continuance to be; if thou withdrawest thy hand but for a moment, we instantly return to our first nothing.

Come, let us adore our God who preserves us.

From all our enemies thy providence defends us, and covers our heads in the day of danger; thou dost send thy grace to strengthen our weakness, that we may overcome the temptations that threaten to undo us.

Come, let us adore our God who preserves us.

Here, thy Almighty power sustains our life, and mercifully allows us space to repent; that by well employing the time thou dost allot us, we may wisely provide for our everlasting existence.

Come, let us adore our God who preserves us.

Thou dost constantly crown us with blessings, and shall we neglect our duty to thee? thou dost freely bestow on us all our time, and shall we refuse to spend a small portion of it in thy service?

Come, let us adore our God who preserves us.

WEDNESDAY MORNING AND EVENING.

HE is our great and Sovereign Lord, the absolute King of Heaven and Earth; he sees at once the whole frame of all things, and thoroughly comprehends their various natures.

Come, let us adore our God who governs us.

To every creature he appoints a fit office, and guides all their motions in perfect order; they all are subject to him, to him they all render homage.

Come, let us adore our God who governs us.

All these he governs by his infinite wisdom, and all for the good of them that love him; his counsels are deep and beyond our reach, but all his ways are just and merciful.

Come, let us adore our God who governs us.

He governs his enemies with a rod of iron, and punishes their wickedness with eternal miseries; but his servants he blesses with the privileges of children, and provides for their reward a glorious inheritance.

Come, let us adore our God who governs us.

THURSDAY MORNING AND EVENING.

HE freely opens his bounteous hand, and fills with his blessings every living creature; the eyes of all wait upon him, and he giveth them their meat in due season.

Come, let us adore our God who sustains us.

He feeds our understanding with the knowledge of truth, and strengthens our wills with his holy grace; he refreshes our memories with a thousand benefits, and feasts our whole souls with everlasting hopes.

Come, let us adore our God who sustains us.

With his spiritual body and blood he feeds us, and preserves us to immortal life; beginning even here that blessed union which shall be fully perfected in his own kingdom.

Come, let us adore our God who sustains us.

Come all ye servants of so gracious a Lord, whom he daily entertains with innumerable mercies; come all ye children of so loving a Father, for whom he has provided an eternal feast:

Come, let us adore our God who sustains us.

FRIDAY MORNING AND EVENING.

HE is a gracious and indulgent Lord, who freely pardons all who repent; who extends his mercies over all his works, and never rejects our humble supplications.

Come, let us adore our God who forgives us.

He willeth not the death of a sinner, but had rather that he should repent and live; he directs to sinners the gracious voice of expostulation, "why will ye die?"

Come, let us adore our God who forgives us.

When we were sunk in guilt and wickedness, he sent his only Son to restore us; when we were enslaved by the chains of sin and Satan, he sent his own Son to redeem us from bondage.

Come, let us adore our God who forgives us.

Let us then turn to our God with our whole hearts, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; let us humbly supplicate his infinite mercy, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Come, let us adore our God who forgives us.

SATURDAY MORNING AND EVENING.

COME, all the powers of our souls, and pay your homage to the Prince of peace; cast yourselves at his sacred feet, and renew your vows of holy obedience.

Come let us adore our victorious Redeemer.

He triumphed over death in his own body; and enables us to conquer it in ours; imparting to us his heavenly skill and exciting our courage with infinite rewards.

Come, let us adore our victorious Redeemer.

He changed the corrupted government of the world, and established a new and holy law; that as we were vassals to sin before, we might now become the free subjects of grace.

Come, let us adore our victorious Redeemer.

Let us live and die in his blest obedience, and let no temptation separate us from him; who, if we resist, will make us overcome, and when we have overcome, will crown us with peace.

Come, let us adore our victorious Redeemer.

Prayers to be used after the above Devotions.

(From the Liturgy of the Church.)

Morning Prayer.

¶ Read a chapter or a portion of a chapter from the Old or New Testament.

O HOLY, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God; have mercy upon *us*, miserable sinners.

Lord, have mercy upon *us*.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon *us*.

O LORD, *we* beseech thee, mercifully hear *our* prayers, and spare all those who confess their sins unto thee, that they whose consciences by sin are accused, by thy merciful pardon may be absolved, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O GOD, the strength of all them that put their trust in thee; mercifully accept *our* prayers: and because through the weakness of *our* mortal nature *we* can do no good thing without thee, grant *us* the help of thy grace, that in keeping thy commandments, *we* may please thee, both in will and deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O GOD, the Protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is *strong*, nothing is holy; increase and

multiply upon *us*, thy mercy, that thou being *our* ruler and guide, *we* may so pass through things temporal, that *we* finally lose not the things eternal: Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake our Lord. *Amen.*

LORD, *we* beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee, the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O LORD, our heavenly Father, Almighty and everlasting God, who has safely brought *us* to the beginning of this day; defend *us* in the same with thy mighty power, and grant that this day *we* fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all *our* doings, being ordered by thy governance, may be righteous in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY God, *we* give thee humble thanks, that thou hast vouchafed to deliver *us*, thy servants, from all the perils and dangers of the past night: Grant, *we* beseech thee, most merciful Father, that *we*, through thy help, may both faithfully live, and walk according to thy will in this life present, and also may be partakers of everlasting glory in the life to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who dost govern all things in heaven and earth; mercifully hear the supplications of thy people, and grant *us* thy peace all the days of *our* life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

OUR Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

UNTO thy gracious mercy and protection, O God, *we* commit ourselves, and all *our* friends and relations; beseeching thee to bless, preserve, and keep *us* in *our* going out and coming in, this day and for ever more. *Amen.*

Evening Prayers.

O LORD, show thy mercy upon *us*—and grant *us* thy salvation. O God, make clean *our* hearts within *us*—and take not thy Holy Spirit from *us*.

O LORD, *we* acknowledge and bewail *our* sins and wickedness. For *we* have done the things that *we* ought not to have done, and have left undone the things that *we* ought to have done; and there is no health in *us*. Have mercy upon *us*, have mercy upon *us*, most merciful God. For thy Son Jesus Christ's sake, forgive *us* all that is past; and grant that *we*, whose consciences by sin are accused, by thy merciful pardon may be absolved, through Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear, than *we* to pray, and are wont to give more than *we* desire or deserve; pour down upon *us* the abundance of thy mercy, forgiving *us* those things whereof *our* conscience is afraid, and giving *us* those good things which *we* are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son *our* Lord. *Amen.*

GRANT, *we* beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, *our* hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY God, who seest that *we* have no power of ourselves to help ourselves; keep *us* both outwardly in *our* bodies, and inwardly in *our* souls, that *we* may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, of thy bountiful goodness, keep *us*, *we* beseech thee, from all things that may hurt *us;* that *we*, being ready both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things that thou wouldest have done, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

O LORD, our heavenly Father, by whose Almighty power *we* have been preserved this day; by thy great mercy defend *us* from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son *our* Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

O GOD, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, *we* humbly beseech thee for all sorts and conditions of men, that thou wouldest be pleased to make thy ways known unto them, thy saving health unto all nations. More especially *we* pray for thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians, may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of Spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, *we* commend to thy Fatherly goodness, all those who are any ways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate; that it may please thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions.

We beseech thee also, so to direct and dispose the hearts of all Christian Rulers, that they may truly and impartially administer justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of thy true religion and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and other Ministers; that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments; and to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, that they may serve thee in pureness of living and truth, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY God, Father of all mercies, *we*, thine unworthy servants, do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and loving kindness to *us*, and to all men. *We* bless thee for *our* creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but, above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus

Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And, *we* beseech thee, give *us* that due sense of all thy mercies, that *our* hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that *we* may show forth thy praise, not only with *our* lips, but in *our* lives; by giving up *ourselves* to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all *our* days, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

GRANT, O Lord, that as *we* are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; so by continually mortifying *our* corrupt affections, *we* may be buried with him, and through the grave and gate of death, *we* may pass to *our* joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for *us*, thy Son Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen*

OUR Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

UNTO thy gracious mercy and protection, O God, *we* commit ourselves, and all *our* friends and relations, this night and evermore. O Lord, bless and keep *us*. Lord, make thy face to shine upon *us*, and be gracious unto *us*. Lord, lift up thy countenance upon *us*, and give *us* peace both now and evermore *Amen.*

DEVOTIONS

TO BE USED ON THE SUNDAYS IN ADVENT.

BEHOLD, our Lord will appear; and will not fail to make good his promise. If he delay a while, patiently wait; for he surely will come, and visit us with his salvation. *Alleluja.*

Come, O thou Sun of Righteousness, and fountain of eternal light! come, and illumine those who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; come, guide our feet in the ways of peace. *Alleluja.*

Come, O thou hope of the gentiles, and the desire of all nations! come, and redeem us from the vassalage of sin, into the only true liberty of serving thee. *Alleluja.*

PREPARE now thy ways, O my soul, before the Lord, make thy paths straight before the face of thy God: for he will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, and blessed are they who are ready to meet him.

Our Lord is come to redeem the world.

Our Lord will come finally to judge it.

O GOD, by whose providence thy Church has appointed the solemn season of Advent, to forerun the commemoration of our Saviour's nativity, and prepare its way in *our* hearts; grant, *we* beseech thee, that *we* may devoutly employ this holy season in meditating upon the glorious predictions which announced the coming of the Messiah, and on the inestimable blessings of his gracious Advent in the flesh, that *our* souls may be excited to celebrate the great festival of his nativity with due joy and exultation, and that *we* may thereby be prepared to expect his second coming to judge the world, who, with thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collects for Advent.*]

Devotions for St. Andrew's Day.

AS soon as St. Andrew saw afar off the cross prepared for his martyrdom, he was transported with joy, and triumphantly saluted it, as the happy instrument of his approaching glory. *Alleluja.*

O that *we* may be always ready to embrace the cross as

becomes the disciples of the crucified Jesus; even with joy to take up the cross by which *we* shall be conformed to *our* glorious Master. *Alleluja.*

O that *we* may never despise the doctrine of the cross, but in courage, and patience, and constancy, and forgiveness of enemies, follow the steps of this blessed Saint, as he followed the steps of Christ, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God. *Alleluja.*

O MOST blessed Saviour and Redeemer Jesus! who out of thine infinite mercy and compassion, didst kindle in the blessed Apostle St. Andrew, so ardent a love for thee that he left all to be thy true and faithful follower; inspire *our* souls, *we* most humbly beseech thee, with a holy desire of thee; that *we* may so earnestly desire, as diligently to seek thee; so successfully seek, as to be happy in finding thee: make *us* so sensible of that happiness in finding, as most fervently to love thee; so effectually to express that love as to suffer any thing for thy sake with a joyful and triumphant spirit. O grant that all the miseries of this life may be rendered easy and supportable by thy divine assistance, by the contemplation of thy example, and by the many patterns of constancy and virtue which thy now glorified saints, but once afflicted servants, have in all ages set forth for *our* imitation and encouragement. Thus encouraged by the bright example of thy blessed Apostle, sustained by the assurance of eternal rewards, and directed in the right way by the light of thy doctrine, may *we* so pass through things temporal, as finally to lose not the things eternal; through thy merits and intercession, O most blessed Saviour and Redeemer Jesus! to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, might, majesty and dominion, henceforth and for ever. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for St. Thomas' Day.

THE other disciples said to Thomas, we have seen the Lord; but he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hand the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe

After eight days Jesus came in, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be with you. Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.

Thomas, now no longer able to resist so clear an evidence, cried out to Jesus, *My Lord and my God.*

O admirable sweetness of our Saviour's spirit! Thomas was incredulous, and peremptory; and yet our Lord forgives him all, and restores him to his favour with the easy penance of a gentle reproof.

Because thou hast seen, O Thomas, thou hast believed. *Blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed.*

O ETERNAL God! fountain of all truth and holiness, in whom to believe is life eternal: let thy grace, *we* most humbly beseech thee, descend into *our* souls, that the commemoration of this blessed Apostle's infidelity may make *us* take warning by his example, and that the revelations which thou hast been pleased to make of thyself may cause *us* constantly to acknowledge thee as *our* Lord and *our* God, and profess *ourselves* the servants of the ever blessed Jesus. Thou, Lord! who hadst compassion on the ignorance and infirmity of St. Thomas, and by his frailties magnified thy mercy, in bringing him to a full assurance of thy Son's resurrection; give *us* grace likewise to improve all thy dispensations unto *our* spiritual advantage, that when *we* stand, *we* may take heed lest *we* fall; and that when *we* are fallen, *we* may endeavour to rise. For, if *we* have any good disposition, *we* acknowledge that it springs from thy grace; if *we* have persevered in doing well, it is because thy strength enabled *us*. O God, keep *us* steadfast in the faith of thy holy name, and conform *us* to the faith of that Jesus in whom *we* believe; that so at the last, *we* may receive the end of *our* faith, even the salvation of *our* souls, by the same Jesus Christ, *our* blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Office of Devotion for Christmas Day.

To be used in private, or in the family.

OFFICE FOR THE MORNING.

TO-DAY for us our Lord was born—come let us adore him.

1. Bring to our Lord, all you his servants, bring to our Lord the sacrifice of praise; bring to our Lord, all ye nations of the earth, bring hymns of glory to his great name.

To-day for us our Lord was born—come let us adore him.

2. O joyful tidings, worthy of an angel's mouth! "Behold, to you is born this day, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

To-day for us our Lord was born—come let us adore him.

3. Let us learn of him, and he will teach us his ways; let us follow him, and we shall walk in his path—for the law and its types were given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

To-day for us our Lord was born—come let us adore him.

4. Come, let us ascend to the house of our Lord, where he is truly worshipped, and celebrate this day with a holy joy—imploring his mercies for all we need, and blessing his bounty for all we enjoy.

To-day for us our Lord was born—come let us adore him.

PSALM.

How early, O my God, didst thou engage to redeem us!

The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.

How often didst thou repeat thy promises to Abraham!

In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

How many methods did thy mercy invent; by unquestionable tokens to give notice of thy coming!

Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and his name shall be called Emanuel.

There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse; and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding.

The spirit of counsel and might; the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the Lord.

The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a prophet of thy brethren; unto him shall ye hearken.

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be least among the thousands of Judah; yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, who is to be the ruler in Israel;

Whose goings forth have been of old; even from the days of eternity.

Hark, how the Almighty Father introduces his Son, commanding first all the angels of God to worship him.

Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee; thou art my Son, and I will be thy Father.

I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou art mine elect, my servant whom I have chosen, to raise up the tribes of Judah, and to restore the preserved of Israel.

I will give thee a light for the gentiles: that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth.

Hark, how the ancient prophets rejoice in the Messiah and in soft and gentle words foretel his compassionate office.

He shall come down as rain into a fleece of wool; and as drops of dew distilling on the earth.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; and gently lead those that are with young.

He shall gather the lambs with his arms; and carry them in his bosom.

The bruised reed shall he not break; nor quench the smoking flax.

Righteousness and peace shall flourish in his days; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened; and the ears of the deaf be made to hear.

Then shall all the tongues of the dumb be loosened; and the lame man shall leap as an hart.

Thus, O Jesus, did thy holy prophets prophesy of thee thus did thy servants sing thy praises.

Wonder, O my soul, at the mercies of thy Lord; how infinitely transcending even our utmost wishes.

The *eternal Wisdom* himself comes down, to clothe himself with our miserable nature.

Had thy Saviour been less than God, we could never have believed the mysteries of his doctrine.

Had he not been man, we could not have had a suffering Redeemer; nor the powerful motives of his holy example.

Had he been merely man, his sufferings would have want-

ed that infinite merit, by which they atoned for our transgressions.

Had he been only God, he could never have died upon the cross, nor suffered the least of those afflictions he so gloriously overcame.

O blessed Jesus! both God and man art thou in thy glorious person; teach us, as both, to adore and follow thee.

Be thou our *God*, and teach us to adore thee; be thou our *guide*, and teach us to follow thee.

O thou eternal King of heaven, display towards us thy *grace* and *glory*.

So rule us here, that we may obey thy *grace*; so favour us hereafter, that we may enjoy thy *glory*.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

THE LESSON.—From Isaiah.

O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain. O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold, the Lord will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Thus, holy Jesus, did the ancient prophets foretel thy perfections, and the blessed changes thy doctrines should produce; the cruelty of the proud should be softened into meekness, and the innocency of the weak be protected by the strong.

This was thy wise and gracious design; to make us happy, by making us holy.

Thou who alone art mighty in power, verify, we beseech thee, these glorious predictions: defend the good, and rebuke the wicked, and fill the earth with thy knowledge; that all discord and animosity may utterly cease, and truth and justice govern the world.

This was thy wise and gracious design; to make us happy by making us holy.

THE HYMN.

Hither, ye faithful, haste with songs of triumph;
To Bethlehem haste, the Lord of life to meet:
To you this day is born a Prince and Saviour—
O come and let us worship at his feet.

O Jesus! for such wondrous condescension
Our thanks and praises are an offering meet;
Now is the word made flesh, and dwells among us,
O come and let us worship at his feet.

Shout his Almighty name, ye choirs of angels,
Let the celestial courts his praise repeat;
Unto our God be glory in the highest,
O come and let us worship at his feet.

O GOD! who every year renewest the holy joy of thy Church, by the welcome festival of her Saviour's birth; grant, we beseech thee, that we may, with devout affection, welcome this first rising of the Sun of Righteousness, and, with holy sincerity and zeal, follow him through his suffering yet glorious course, increasing in knowledge, in truth, and in love; till in the end we arrive at the perfect glories of his heavenly rest; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ thy Son, who, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

OFFICE FOR THE EVENING.

Repeat the Introductory Devotions, in the Morning Office, marked 1, 2, 3, and then add]

4. Blessed be thy glorious name, O glorious Son of God, and blessed be thy mercy for ever; thou hast graciously fulfilled what thy prophets foretold, and entered on the office of man's Redeemer.

To-day for us our Lord was born—come let us adore him.

[Then repeat the Psalm in the Morning Office.]

THE LESSON.—Titus ii. 11.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly

in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Thus, O Jesus, thou dost teach us to remember that thou art a spiritual Redeemer, come to enlighten our dark minds, to renew our depraved affections.

For thou hast bought us unto thyself, to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

O may the light of thy truth shine into our hearts, and the beams of thy grace purify and redeem them; that so we may humbly and joyfully expect the eternal fruition of thy glorious presence.

For thou hast bought us unto thyself, to be a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

THE HYMN.

How matchless is thy form, O King!
Thy mouth with grace o'erflows;
Because fresh blessings God on thee
Eternally bestows.

Gird on thy sword, most mighty Prince,
And clad in rich array,
With glorious ornaments of power
Majestic pomp display.

For thy firm throne, O God, is fix'd
For ever to endure;
Thy sceptre's sway shall always last,
By righteous laws secure.

To Father, Son, &c.

O HOLY and ever blessed Jesus! who, being the eternal Son of God, and most high in the glory of the Father, didst vouchsafe for *us* sinners, to be born of an humble virgin, and to be subject to the weakness, the wants, and sorrows of *our* nature, to accomplish *our* redemption; excite in *us*, *we* beseech thee, a due sense of thy infinite love, that adoring thee as *our* Lord and *our* God, and believing in thee as *our* all-sufficient Saviour, *we* may evermore trust in thy infinite merits, imitate thy holy example, and obey thy righteous commands; that thus *we* may finally enjoy thy glorious promises, living and reigning for ever with thee, who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, God blessed for ever, world without end. *Amen.*

[Add the Collect for the Day.]

Devotions for St. Stephen's Day.

ST. STEPHEN, full of grace and courage, resolutely proclaimed the gospel of his Master; and none could resist the wisdom and spirit with which he spake.

He boldly set before the Jews their awful guilt, and the awful guilt of their forefathers, as betrayers and murderers of the *just One*, and of those who foretold his coming.

When they expressed against him their rage and fury, he looked steadfastly up, and saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

While they stoned him, he triumphantly called upon his Saviour, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;* and, kneeling down, implored the pardon of his murderers, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*

O MOST great and glorious Lord God, the bountiful bestower of all blessings, who in thy first martyr St. Stephen, has vouchsafed to thy Church an eminent example of all Christian graces, kindle in *our* hearts, *we* beseech thee, a zealous emulation of his faith and courage, his zeal and constancy, his patience and resignation, his meekness and love; that imitating his constancy in maintaining thy truth, and his charity in forgiving *our* enemies, *we* may finally be received into the everlasting kingdom of peace and love, there to enjoy the exalted vision of the face and excellency of God the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost;* to whom be glory and power, honour and adoration, thanksgiving and praise, now and for ever. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for St. John the Evangelist's Day.

THIS is the favourite disciple who leaned on our Lord's breast at his last supper, and to whom were revealed the secrets of heaven.

This is he, in whom meet all those glorious titles of Apostle, Evangelist, Prophet, and Confessor.

This is he, who, above all those glorious titles, delights in this one, incomparably greater than they all—*the disciple whom Jesus loved.*

He alone had the sympathy and courage to assist at the

cross the mourning mother of Jesus; he alone had the glory to hear himself and her bequeathed to one another as mother and son.

O GOD, by the prerogative of whose special grace the blessed apostle St. John obtained the transcendent title of *the beloved of his Master*, and afterwards became the great teacher of charity throughout the world! grant, *we* beseech thee, that his sacred memory may excite *us* to attain the same purity of body and mind, the same steady love of thee, and sincere charity one for another; that so *we* may possess a humble claim to the same blessed title, *the beloved of our Master;* and share in its happy consequences, thy grace here, and thy glory hereafter; through Jesus Christ thy Son, who liveth and reigneth, one God, with thee and the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Holy Innocents' Day.

O THE wonderful Providence of God! which overruled the purpose of cruelty in the tyrant Herod, to the immortal glory of the innocent children whose blood he shed.

For these were brought from amongst men as the first fruits of God and the Lamb; and in their mouths there was found no guile; they are without spot before the throne of God.

A voice was heard in Rama, lamentation, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Weep not for thy children, Rachel! behold they live.

Be comforted; they are exalted to glory; they reign with their Saviour for ever and ever.

O BLESSED and Eternal God! who, by the martyrdom of the Holy Innocents, has taught thy Church, that no age or occasion of suffering for the Saviour is exempt from high reward; grant, *we* beseech thee, that *our* celebration of this festival may lead *us* supremely to adore thy mysterious Providence. O do thou stir up *our* hearts sincerely and faithfully to glorify thee by an innocent and holy life; humbly to submit to thy *will; to* trust in thy goodness; and, contemn-

ing the world, to aspire after thy favour; that thus finally, by thy mercy, *we* may be admitted to the participation of the immortal felicities of that heavenly kingdom where these innocent martyrs are exalted, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Devotions for the Circumcision, or New-Year's Day.

TO-DAY our Lord was circumcised, and received the divine and saving name of Jesus. *Alleluja. Come, let us adore him. Come, let us adore him.*

To-day our blessed Saviour, who was Lord of the law, and by his perfect purity, absolutely exempt from its penalties, submitted for us to the painful rite of circumcision, and dishonour of being reckoned among sinners.

To-day we give the name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, of things on earth, and things under the earth.

O blessed Jesus, make good to us thy precious name, and save us from our sins; that now we may begin a new year of piety and holiness, and cancel by our repentance the failings of the old.

O MOST blessed God! who, for *our* example, didst command thy beloved Son to submit his pure and innocent flesh to the rigour of the law; and for encouragement of *our* hope, didst make choice of the divine and tender name of JESUS; teach *us*, *we* beseech thee, with readiness and humility to obey thy sacred laws, howsoever averse they may be to *our* unmortified passions; and in all *our* necessities, to call with joy and confidence on that holy name, through which whatsoever *we* ask, *we* are promised shall be granted. Endue *us* with courage and resolution to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; that being rescued from the dominion of sin, and turned from darkness to light, *we* may evermore live as thy servants and subjects. Mindful of the shortness and uncertainty of life, may *we* diligently employ the allotted term of *our* probation in working out *our* salvation; that so, at the last and awful day of account, *we* may be accepted and blessed through the merits of him, who is the only Saviour, Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Epiphany.

TO-DAY the wise men brought presents to our Lord *Alleluja. Come, let us adore him. Come, let us adore him.*

To-day the wise men were led by a star to the cradle of our Lord, and falling down adored him, and offered him their royal presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Now were the first fruits of the Gentiles consecrated unto the Lord, and that prophecy happily fulfilled; "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." *Alleluja! Alleluja! Alleluja.*

O GOD! who, by the guidance of a miraculous star, didst lead the Gentiles to the eternal Sun of Righteousness, newly risen upon the world; *we* beseech thee to lead *us* by thy grace to a spiritual knowledge and love of this Saviour, the only hope and refuge of fallen man. O let thy holy Spirit illuminate *our* understandings with the knowledge of him, incline *our* wills to obey him, and *our* affections to desire and seek after him. May *we* render him homage by *our* wealth employed in his service, and for the good of others; by *our* prayers and praises devoutly offered to him; and by *our* souls and bodies presented as a holy and living sacrifice to him; and may *we*, with ardour, look forward to the glorious period, when thy chosen people the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentiles, shall come to the saving knowledge of thy Son Jesus Christ *our* Lord, who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of the Conversion of St. Paul.

TO-DAY let us remember the great Apostle of the Gentiles miraculously converted to the Christian faith. *Come let us adore the Almighty God who hath made this Apostle great in Church. Alleluja.*

This day we commemorate, how our Lord, in a glorious light, appeared from heaven to the greatest persecutor of his name; and made him, with trembling and astonishment, cry out, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do!* He was made blind

that he might see; and from a most bitter persecutor, he straight became a most zealous disciple; not a *disciple* only, but an *Apostle*. *Alleluja.*

We celebrate this day one of the most stupendous changes that ever was wrought; a conversion, the most wonderful of all conversions; and from which millions of others have been derived. The illustrious convert preaches undauntedly the faith he had once opposed; and he, who had persecuted others to death, even lays down his life in defence of the same faith. *Alleluja. Alleluja.*

Thou art a vessel of election, O Paul! teacher of the Gentiles! the great preacher of truth throughout the world. We bless thee, O God, for having caused, through the preaching of thy blessed Apostle Paul, the light of salvation to shine on the nations that sat in darkness and the shadow of death. *Alleluja.*

He fought a good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith.

And therefore there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness.

O ALMIGHTY God! may *we* ever devoutly praise thy grace, whereby thou didst make this Apostle *a vessel prepared unto glory;* may *we* ever adore that incomprehensible love whereby thou didst enable him to promulgate the blessed gospel throughout the world. Encouraged by thy mercy to him, may *we* never despair of obtaining forgiveness from thee. Always keeping in mind the doctrines which he taught, resolutely following his zealous and holy example, continuing in thy service faithful unto death, may *we*, at last, receive a crown of life and glory in the highest heavens, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord and only Saviour. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of the Purification, &c.

TO-DAY *our blessed Lord was presented in the temple. Alleluja. Come, let us adore him.*

To-day the blessed and holy mother of God, in most humble obedience, performed the common rites of purification, and presented her first-born Jesus in the temple; redeeming *him*, according to the law, for the price of five shekels of silver.

To-day the devout Simeon took our Lord in his arms; and knowing that nothing now could make him happier but the joys of heaven, burst forth in this ardent prayer to God: *Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

To-day the holy widow and prophetess Anna, who had spent her life in fasting and prayer, and in the service of the temple, came happily in, and saw our Lord, and spake gloriously of him to all who expected redemption in Israel.

Behold, the Lord, thy mighty Governor, is come into his holy temple; be glad, O Sion, and rejoice to meet thy God. *Alleluja.*

O GOD, who dost call *us* this day to commemorate the blessed Virgin's presenting herself in the temple to be purified, and her Son to be redeemed according to the law; give *us* grace, *we* beseech thee, to adore and praise the condescension of thy Providence, which, by such great examples, dost teach *us our* duty of submitting to thy wise and holy discipline, though sometimes appearing unnecessary for *ourselves*. Grant that *we* may ever reverently attend the public institutions of thy holy religion, and never neglect those means which thou hast provided for purifying *our* corrupt natures. Subdue in *our* hearts the emotions of pride and vain-glory, and enable *us* ever diligently to imitate the *humble* and holy example of *our* blessed Redeemer. By *our* lives, as well as by *our* professions, may *we* confess Jesus Christ thy Son, to be *our* Lord and Saviour, the light of the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel; that thus *we* may be partakers of the everlasting salvation which he has purchased; who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions to be used every Day during the Season of Lent.

COME, let us arise and go to our Father; let us turn to the Lord our God, that he may turn to us and bless us.

Let us follow our divine Master in his forty days retirement and fasting.

Our blessed Lord, who for our sakes did fast forty days and forty nights, will not refuse us his grace, that our flesh

being subdued to the spirit, we may ever obey his godly motions in righteousness and true holiness.

Let us turn every one from his evil way; and the Lord will turn from his fierce anger.

The Lord our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repents him of the evil.

If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.

Let us humbly confess and resolve to forsake our sins,
And strive for the future to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.
Father, we have sinned against thee,
And are no more worthy to be called thy children.
Help us, O Lord our Saviour,
And blot out all our iniquities.

O GOD, who hast called *us*, to lighten the weight of *our* corrupt bodies, which press down *our* immortal souls, by the long and solemn abstinence of forty days; dispose *us*, *we* beseech thee conscientiously to observe this wholesome discipline prescribed to us by the Church. Grant that *we* may devote this holy season to religious retirement and meditation; to serious examination of the state of *our* souls; to sincere repentance for *our* sins: that so, by due mortification of the flesh, and by frequent devotions, all *our* carnal appetites may be fitted for burial in *our* Saviour's grave; and all *our* affections ready to rise with him to immortality, at those sacred feasts, for which this season is designed to prepare *us*, through *our* Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions to be added on Ash Wednesday to the other Devotions for the Season of Lent

COME, let us fast and mourn and pray, for our Lord is merciful and just.

O LORD, deal not with us according to our sins;
Nor reward us according to our iniquities.
Remember not our former transgressions;
But let thy mercy speedily deliver us.
Help us, O God our Redeemer;

For the glory of thy name.
Keep thy servants, good Lord, for thy mercy's sake,
And forget not the souls of the humble for ever.
Receive and comfort all true penitents;
Who turn to thee in weeping, fasting, and praying.
Deliver all who are tempted;
Good Lord, deliver them.
Be gracious, O Lord, be gracious to all who are weary and heavy laden;
Nor let any of them be brought to confusion.
Spare thy people, good Lord, spare them;
And to all thy faithful give life eternal.
Vouchsafe to us the light of thy countenance;
And quicken us with the joy of thy salvation.
Defend us, O Christ, from the danger of the enemy;
And keep us from the evil of our own hearts.
O Christ, hear us;
O Lamb of God, hear us.
Lord, have mercy upon us;
Christ, have mercy upon us.

MOST gracious God, the fountain of all mercy and blessing, who desirest not the death of a sinner, nor despisest the tears of the penitent; favourably receive these *our* supplications, and effectually move *our* hearts to a true contrition; that, receiving forgiveness of the sins *we* have presumed to commit, *we* may be delivered from the evils *we* have deserved to suffer; and, assisted by thy grace, and fed by thy heavenly word, may spend the short remainder of *our* days in a more perfect denial of *our* corrupt inclinations, and more firm reliance on thy glorious promises; through *our* Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Matthias.

LET them that stand take heed lest they fall. Judas was an Apostle, yet betrayed his Master, and died in despair; and another took his office.

The eleven appointed two for the vacant Apostleship, Barnabas and Matthias, and gave them lots, and prayed.

They prayed, Thou, Lord, that knowest the hearts of all men, show which of those two thou hast chosen—and the lot fell on Matthias.

The lot fell on Matthias, a continual follower of Jesus, from the baptism of John, till the day of his ascension; and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles.

He lived their life, and died their death.

And sits with them in glory to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

O ALMIGHTY and everlasting God; by whose special grace the blessed Matthias was chosen to supply the room of the traitor Judas, and complete the number of the Apostles; grant, *we* humbly beseech thee, that *our* devout celebration of his memory may excite in *us* a lively desire to imitate his virtues, that thereby *we* may follow him in his passage to everlasting glory. May the recollection of the lamentable apostacy of Judas teach *us* the necessity of diligent and holy watchfulness; that, under the guidance and succours of thy grace, *we* may be supported in all dangers, and carried through all temptations, through Jesus Christ *our* blessed Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of the Annunciation.

TO-DAY the eternal word was made flesh.

Come, let us adore him.

To-day the Archangel was sent from God to the Virgin Mary, and addressed her with the honourable salutation, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women."

"Behold, thou shalt conceive and bear a Son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

And blessed Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word."

Therefore let all generations call her blessed.

ALMIGHTY God and most merciful Father, who gavest thy only Son to take *our* nature upon him of a pure Virgin, and didst announce the glorious truth to her by the

message of an angel; bless *us*, *we* humbly beseech thee, with grace, like her to keep and ponder in *our* hearts, all thy wondrous acts of love, that *we* may bring forth fruits worthy of them in *our* lives; and mercifully grant that, united to the Saviour in the communion of his Church, by a true and living faith, *we* may dwell in him, and he in *us* for ever and ever. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

The Devotions for the Sundays in Lent, the same as for ordinary Sundays; except the following:

Devotions for the fifth Sunday in Lent, called Passion Sunday.

BEHOLD the passion of our Lord draws nigh.
Let us prepare to sympathize with him in his bitter sorrows.

O THAT my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that day and night I might weep for my sins, which were the cause of my Saviour's sufferings.

What, O divine Saviour, did our weakness require, which thou hast not done! What, O thou Lamb of God, could our malice invent, which thou hast not suffered!

Far be it from us to glory in any thing but the cross of Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto us, and we unto the world, and in whom is our life, our health, and our salvation.

What, O divine Saviour, did our weakness require, which thou hast not done!

What, O thou Lamb of God, could our malice invent, which thou hast not suffered!

O GOD, who by the mortifying discipline of Lent dost teach *us* to prepare for the celebration of *our* Saviour's passion; give *us* grace, we beseech thee, so devoutly to meditate on the series of his bitter sufferings, that *our* hearts may be penetrated with contrition for *our* offences which were the cause of them; that thus *we* may be fitted to share in the glories of his resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ thy Son; who once suffered, but now liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Sunday next before Easter, called Palm Sunday.

TO-DAY our Saviour entered Jerusalem in triumph.

Come let us adore him.

Rejoice, O daughter of Zion! shout for gladness, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh to thee, the just One, and thy Saviour.

Hosanna in the highest.

Strew the way for his triumph, and cry aloud, Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. He cometh to thee, meek and lowly, and riding on a colt, the foal of an ass.

Hosanna in the highest.

Lift up thy voice, and cry—Lo, this is the Lord, whom we have long expected; he himself is come to redeem us; lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us. *Hosanna!* This is the Lord, we have waited for him; even our God, whom we have long looked for; O let us be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.

Hosanna in the highest.

O GOD, teach *us*, *we* beseech thee, by the solemnities of this day which ushers in by a *triumph* the Saviour's bitter *passion*, to remember the fickleness of the glory of the world; and so by thy grace mortify in *us our* esteem of its best deserved applauses, and bring *us* cheerfully to bear its crosses, that *we* finally may be partakers of the eternal glories on which *our* Saviour Christ hath entered; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

During Passion-Week add to the ordinary Devotions for Lent the following.

MONDAY.

ALMIGHTY Father, who hast given thy only begotten Son to be unto *us* both a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of meek and patient suffering, of righteousness and holiness of life; give *us* grace, that *we* may always, and at this time especially, thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour *ourselves* to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life, and to be conformed to his death and sufferings, unto thy eternal glory, through the same Jesus *Christ our* Lord. *Amen.*

TUESDAY.

LET thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of thy poor frail creatures; and so strengthen and animate *us* by thy heavenly succours and consolations, that *we* may be always ready to suffer for thy holy name; and following the suffering steps of thy Son Jesus Christ, in all lowliness, meekness, and patience, even unto death itself, may at length attain the blessed hope of thy kingdom, through the same, thy well-beloved Son, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and evermore. *Amen.*

WEDNESDAY.

O LORD God Almighty, who to redeem lost mankind, didst suffer thy only Son to be at this time betrayed and sold into the hands of his enemies, by one of his own disciples and familiar friends; grant *us*, by the help of thy Spirit, always to detest and abhor *our* own sins, which, no less than the traitor Judas, was the occasion of the Saviour's death. Mercifully sustain *us* by thy grace, that *we* may never, after having tasted the good word of life, fall from thee, through covetousness or any other temptation; but may steadfastly persevere unto the end, under all trials, in the fellowship of thy Word and Spirit, and in the communion of all Saints both in heaven and earth, through the same Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

Devotions to be used on the Thursday before Easter, instead of the other Devotions for the Season of Lent.

OUR Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is my body, which was given for you: Do this in remembrance of me.

After the same manner also he took the cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood. This do ye as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me.

As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come.

OUR Lord Jesus, rising from supper, laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself; after that,

he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

After he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done unto you? You call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am.

If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet; for I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you.

GRANT, O Lord Jesus Christ, that as thy Church doth this day devoutly and reverently commemorate the institution of thy holy supper, so *we*, with all the true members of thy Church, may, through a living faith and charity, spiritually partake of thy most precious body and blood, till *we* come at length to sit down with thee in thy kingdom, to celebrate the everlasting festival of love. And as thou didst also this day give *us* an example of thy great and profound humility, by condescending to wash even the feet of thy disciples, *we* beseech thee to instil into *our* hearts the very same humility, and to cleanse and purify *us* from *our* sins, that so *we* may be clothed with thy righteousness; and after a short time of suffering here, may live and reign with thee for ever, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions to be added to our other Devotions on those Days when the Holy Communion *is administered.*

FOR THE MORNING.

I AM the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eat of this bread, he shall live for ever.

This is my body which is given for you.

This is my blood which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins.

O sweet and sacred feast! wherein Christ himself is by lively symbols received by the faithful; and the memory of his passion forcibly renewed.

O exalted and inestimable feast! wherein our minds are filled with grace; and our future glory secured to us by dear and precious pledges.

In the strength of this bread we will steadfastly walk,
Even to the mountain of the God of our salvation. Alleluja.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love and mercy, didst give thy only Son to suffer death upon the cross for *us* miserable sinners, who lay in darkness and the shadow of death; grant, *we* beseech thee, that *we*, duly celebrating a perpetual memory of this his precious death and sacrifice until his coming again, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood; be filled with his spirit and life; and being made thy *children*, may finally be exalted to an inheritance everlasting, to the bosom of this thy Son Jesus Christ our only Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

FOR THE EVENING.

WE have tasted and seen how good the Lord is;
Therefore our souls shall magnify him for ever.
We will rejoice in God our Saviour;
From this time forth, and for evermore.
For unto us is given the bread of life;
Unto us is opened the fountain of salvation.

ALMIGHTY God, *our* heavenly Father, *we* most heartily desire to bless and magnify thy holy name, for the inestimable gift of the body and blood of thy Son, which *we* have this day spiritually received under lively symbols; grant that, being incorporated into his mystical body, the blessed company of the faithful, *we* may be evermore refreshed by his mercy, and guided by his grace. From this day forth, *we* offer up *ourselves*, *our* souls and bodies, to thy disposal, to be a reasonable and living sacrifice rendered acceptable unto thee, through the one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice of this thy Son, *our* only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Office of Devotion for Good-Friday.

OFFICE FOR THE MORNING.

WHEN we had sold ourselves to sin, and had all become the slaves of Satan; the blessed Jesus descended from heaven, and shed his blood to purchase our redemption.

Come, let us adore our God who redeemed us.

Let us consecrate this day to holy meditation on his unparalleled sufferings; repenting from our hearts of our many sins, and thankfully adoring his infinite mercies.

Come, let us adore our God who redeemed us.

Let us wean our minds from worldly concerns, and mortify our passions by holy self-denial; that, carried on the wings of fasting and alms, our prayers may ascend more swiftly to heaven.

Come, let us adore our God who redeemed us.

PSALM.

My God! who can complain of doing too much, when they consider the labour of Jesus!

When he might have flown on the wings of the cherubim; he chose to walk with us worms of the dust.

When he might have commanded manna from heaven; in the sweat of his brows he would eat his bread.

When he might have made the angels his footstool; he rather became the servant of his parents.

It was thy meat and drink to do thy Father's will; O Jesus, make it our's to perform thine.

My God! who can repine at suffering too much, when they remember the afflictions of Jesus!

Those many afflictions which he so patiently endured; whose weight he bore with holy resignation;

Even from his humble cradle in the manger of Bethlehem, to his bitter cross on the mount of Calvary.

We bear the badge of a crucified Saviour; and shall we shrink back at every cross we meet?

We believe in a Lord who was crowned with thorns; and shall we expect to tread on nothing but roses?

Before our eyes, O Jesus, we see thee humble and meek; and shall thy servants be proud and insolent?

We see thee travel up and down, poor and unregarded; and shall thy followers expect to be rich and esteemed?

Thy charitable labours were maliciously slandered; and shall we not have the patience to hear our faults reproved?

Thou disdainedst not to be called in scorn the Carpenter's Son; and cannot we bear to receive injury and insult?

O how unlike are we to the blest Redeemer, who descended from heaven to become our pattern!

How do we go astray from the sacred path, which the holy Jesus traced with his own steps!

Pity, O blessed Redeemer, the infirmities of thy children; strengthen with thy grace our fainting hearts.

Arm us, O glorious Conqueror of sin and death, against all the fears and terrors of the world.

Arm all our powers with those celestial virtues, of faith, and hope, and invincible love:

That we may still go on, and resolutely oppose whatever stands in our way to heaven.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

The LESSON.—From ISAIAH, the PSALMS, &c.

Hearken unto me, my people, give ear unto me, O my nation; for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me. I looked, and there was none to help. All that see me, laugh me to scorn; they shoot out their lips, they shake the head, saying, He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. I was as one that is deaf and heard not, as a dumb man that opened not his mouth. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and roaring lion; for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me. They pierced my hands and my feet; all my bones are out of joint. They part my garments among them, and cast lots for my vesture. They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. My strength is dried up as a potsherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me to the dust of death.

These sufferings, O blessed Jesus, and infinitely more thou didst sustain in thy own glorious person; so that thy soul, in the bitterness of anguish, burst forth in the cry,

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

I was betrayed and bound, and led away captive; I was reviled, buffeted, and scornfully spit upon; I was stripped, scourged, and condemned to a cruel death; I was crowned

with thorns, and pierced with nails, and crucified among thieves.

O all ye that pass by the way, behold my sorrow; was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger!

PSALM.

Shall we indulge in joy, O my soul, to-day? Shall we not mourn at the death of our blessed Redeemer?

Worthy of our profound adoration, O blessed Jesus, is thy mysterious love; for thou hast made thy sorrows the spring of our joys.

Thou didst forbid thy followers to weep for thee; and didst reserve to thyself alone the shame and grief.

Thou didst invite all the world to glory in thy cross; and dost command us to delight in the memory of thy passion.

Sing, then, all ye nations of the earth; sing hymns of glory to the holy Jesus.

Sing, O ye children of men; sing immortal praises to the God of our salvation:

To him, who, for us, endured so much scorn; and patiently received so many injuries:

To him, who, for us, sweat great drops of blood; and drank off the dregs of his Father's wrath:

To the eternal Lord of heaven and earth, who, for us, was slain by the hands of the wicked:

Who for us was led away as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a meek lamb opened not his mouth.

Come, let us summon all our powers, and reverently offer our hearts at the foot of his cross.

Thither let us fly from the troubles of the world; there let us dwell among the mercies of heaven.

Let us speedily prepare our richest sacrifice of praise; and make haste, and adore our blessed Redeemer.

Let us look up to the cross, and behold our crucified Lord; and offer to him our devout adoration.

Blest be the hands that wrought so many miracles; and were so barbarously pierced with cruel nails.

Blest be the feet that so often travelled for us; and were at last unmercifully fastened to the cross.

Blest be the head that was crowned with thorns; the head that so industriously studied our happiness.

Blest be the heart that was pierced with a spear; the heart that so passionately loved our peace.

Blest be the entire person of our crucified Lord; and may all our powers join in his praise:

In thy eternal praise, O blessed Jesus; and in the enrapturing thoughts of thy infinite love.

Can we remember, O Jesus, thy labours for us, and not be convinced of our duty to thee?

Can our cold hearts recount thy sufferings, and not be inflamed with the love that suffered?

Can we believe that our salvation cost thee so dear, and yet live as if to be saved were not worth our pains?

For all thy favours, thou dost seek no other return, than that we should follow thy steps to arrive at thy glory.

O gracious Saviour! behold, to thee we bow; we prostrate ourselves at thy cross, adoring thy mercy.

Behold, thus low we bow to implore thy blessing, and the powerful influences of thy divine grace.

Wean our affections from all vain objects, and purify our hearts from all unhallowed passions.

Then shall our lives be entirely dedicated to thee; and all the faculties of our souls to thy holy service.

Our minds shall continually study thy knowledge; and our wills grow every day stronger in thy love.

Our memories shall faithfully recount thy mercies; and both our tongues and our hearts rejoice for ever.

O blessed Jesus! whose grce alone begins, and ends, and perfects all our hopes;

How are we bound to praise thy love! how infinitely obliged to adore thy goodness!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

THE HYMN.

From whence these direful omens round,
Which heaven and earth amaze?
Wherefore do earthquakes cleave the ground?
Why hides the sun his rays?

Well may the earth astonish'd shake,
And nature sympathize!
The sun as darkest night be black!
Their Maker, Jesus, dies!

Behold fast streeming from the tree
His all-atoning blood!
Is this the Infinite? 'tis he,
My Saviour and my God!

For me these pangs his soul assail,
For me this death is borne;
My sins gave sharpness to the nail,
And pointed every thorn.

Let sin no more my soul enslave,
Break, Lord, its tyrant chain:
O save me, whom thou camest to save,
Nor bleed, nor die in vain!

To Father, Son, &c.

O ETERNAL Father, who didst send thy only Son into the world, to assume *our* frail nature, and by his sufferings and death to redeem the world; grant that the continual memory of his bitter passion and death upon the cross may excite in *us* sincere contrition for *our* sins, which were the cause of his sufferings; that humbly confessing and renouncing them, *we* may, through the merits of his precious blood, receive forgiveness; and following through thy grace the blessed steps of his holy and suffering life, may finally be admitted to the fruition of that glory to which he is exalted; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

OFFICE FOR THE EVENING.

[Repeat the Introductory Devotions and Psalm in the Morning Office.]

THE LESSON—PHILIPPIANS ii. 1.

IF there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but *every* man also on the things of others. Let this mind be

in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Christ was for us made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

He is the propitiation of our sins, and not for our's only, but for the sins of the whole world.

THE PSALM.

We are thine, O God, by creation; for thou hast made us after thine own image.

We are thine, O God, by redemption; for thou hast bought us by the blood of thine only Son.

To redeem us he humbled himself to this low world, and the infirmities of our miserable nature.

He patiently endured hunger and thirst, and the malicious affronts of enraged enemies.

His precious blood he shed in the garden; where his soul was overwhelmed in agony unutterable.

His precious blood he shed on the cross; where meekly bowing his fainting head, he yielded up the ghost.

Lord, how does the world requite thy love! how ungrateful are we to thy blessed memory!

We negligently forget thy sacred passion; or rather, far worse, our sins renew thy sufferings.

If we deprive others of their right, what do we but strip thee of thy garments?

While we delight in strife and schisms, what do we else but rend thy seamless coat?

If we despise the least of thy servants, are we not as so many Herods that scorned thee?

If we through fear act against our conscience, how are we better than Pilate who condemned thee?

By forsaking thy will to follow our own, do we not choose a murderer before thee?

By cherishing a sharp and bitter malice, do we not give thee vinegar and gall to drink?

By showing no mercy to the poor and afflicted, do we not pass by the cross as strangers unconcerned?

Thus we again crucify the Lord of glory, and put him afresh to an open shame.

Are these the returns we make to that blessed Redeemer, who came into the world to seek and to save us when we were lost?

We sought not him, but he came from far to find us out; we looked not towards him, but his mercy called us after him.

He called aloud in words of tenderness, Why will ye perish, O ye children of men?

Return, and I will receive you; repent, and though you have crucified me, I will forgive you.

Behold, O blessed Jesus, to thee we come, and on thy holy cross fasten all our confidence.

Never will we depart from this standard of our hope, till our troubled consciences are comforted by thy mercy.

Crucify the world to us, and us to the world; that dead to it, we may live only to thee.

Enter into our hearts, and fill them with thyself; reign in us for ever our Redeemer and Lord.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

THE HYMN.

My God, my God, why leavest thou me,
When I with anguish faint;
O why so far from me removed,
And from my loud complaint?

With laughter all the gazing crowd
My agony survey?
They shoot the lip, they shake the head,
And thus deriding say—

"In God, he trusted, boasting oft
"That he was heaven's delight;
"Let God come down to save him now
"And own his favourite."

Like blood-hounds, to surround me, they
In pack'd assemblies meet;
They pierc'd my inoffensive hands,
They pierced my harmless feet.

As spoil, my garments they divide,
Lots for my vesture cast;
Therefore approach, O Lord, my strength,
And to my succour haste.

To Father, Son, &c.

O HOLY and immaculate Lamb of God! who, by thy obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, hast made an all-sufficient atonement for the sins of the world; mercifully grant, that by thy precious blood *we* may be cleansed from *our* guilt, and by the power of thy grace be crucified unto the world; that thus, through thy mercy, *we* may be prepared for the inheritance of glory which thou hast purchased for *us*. Grant this, *we* beseech thee, O blessed Jesus, who having once suffered, dost now reign with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, in glory for ever. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

[*Add the Collects for the Day.*]

Devotions for Easter Even.

THE body of the Saviour rests in the grave, while his soul triumphantly passes into the place of departed spirits.

In holy confidence thou dost address, O Saviour, thy Almighty Father—"Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption."

Joyful is the assurance which thou dost direct to thy Church —"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body they shall arise."

"Awake, and sing ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

Our Saviour is dead, but he shall rise again.

Come, let us adore the glorious Conqueror of death and hell.

GRANT, O Lord, that as *we* are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; so, by continual mortifying *our* corrupt affections, *we* may be buried

with him; that through the grave and gate of death *we* may pass to *our* joyful resurrection, for his merits, who died, and was buried. and rose again for *us*, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

GIVE *us* grace, O Lord, so to order *our* conversation in the world, that *we* may come to the close of life in thy fear and favour; and receive death not as *our* curse, but *our* deliverance, as an entrance upon a life without sorrow and without sin. Whenever thou dost visit *us* with bodily sickness, teach *us* to resign *ourselves* to thee; to show forth devotion of spirit, humble patience, faith, and confidence. Bless *us* on *our* sick-bed with the benefit of a spiritual guide, and with an opportunity of receiving the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, that the strength of that heavenly food may cheer *our* fainting spirits, and carry *us* with joy to *our* journey's end. In *our* last agonies, O Lord, do thou support *us;* and when *our* strength and *our* heart faileth, be thou the strength of *our* heart, and *our* portion for ever, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Office of Devotion for Easter Day.

THE Lamb of God that was slain, is alive again; and he liveth for ever.

Come, let us adore him. Alleluja.

Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept.

Come, let us adore him. Alleluja.

The Lord of Life is risen again, and hath clothed himself with immortal glory.

Come, let us adore him. Alleluja.

He loosed the bands of death and hell; for it was impossible he should be holden by them.

Come, let us adore him. Alleluja.

He that raised up Jesus, will also raise us up; and refine our vile flesh into a likeness of his glorious body.

Come, let us adore him. Alleluja.

WORTHY is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and honour, and worship, blessing, and glory.

Therefore, blessing, honour, glory, power be to him that

sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Alleluja.

O death, I have been thy plagues.

O grave, I have been thy destruction.

O death, where is thy sting?

O grave, where is thy victory?

PSALM.

Sing unto our Lord a psalm of joy; sing praises to the God of our salvation.

Sing with a loud and cheerful voice; sing with a glad and thankful heart.

Say to the weak in spirit, Be strong; and unto the sorrowful, Be of good comfort.

Tell all mankind this soul-reviving truth; and may their hearts within them leap to hear it.

Tell them—The Lord of life is risen again, and has clothed himself with immortal glory.

He made the angels messengers of his victory; and vouchsafed even himself to bring us the joyful news.

How many ways did thy mercy invent, O thou wise contriver of all our happiness—

To convince thy followers of the reality of thy resurrection, and to settle in their hearts a firm belief of this glorious truth?

Thou didst appear to the holy women in their return from the sepulchre; and didst open their hearts to know and adore thee.

Thou didst overtake in the way the two that discoursed of thee, and made their hearts burn within them to hear thee.

Through the doors, though shut, thou didst swiftly pass, to carry peace to thy comfortless friends;

To allay their fears by thy blessed presence, and to secure their faith by thy powerful arguments.

How often didst thou condescend to eat before them, and invite them to touch thy impassable body!

How didst thou sweetly invite the incredulous Thomas, to thrust his hand into thy wounded side!

O how adorable are thy counsels! O Lord, how endearing are the ways of thy love!

Say now my soul, is not this evidence sufficient to satisfy our darkest doubts?

Is not this hope abundantly sufficient to sweeten all our most bitter sorrows?

What though we mourn, and are afflicted here, and sigh under the miseries of this world for a time;

We are sure our tears shall one day be turned into joy; and that joy none shall take from us.

What though our bodies are crumbled into dust; and that dust blown about over the face of the earth;

Yet we undoubtedly know our Redeemer lives, and shall appear in brightness at the last great day.

He shall appear in the midst of innumerable angels; and with these very eyes we shall behold him.

We shall see him in whom we have so long believed; we shall find him whom we have so often sought:

We shall possess him whom our souls have loved; and be united to him for ever, who is the only end of our being.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

THE LESSON.—From 1 Cor. xv. 20, and Col. iii.

Christ is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For, as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members that are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience: in the which you also walked when you lived in them. But now you also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him; where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumsion, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, or *free; but* Christ is all, and in all.

O glorious Jesus! in whom is the spring of our spiritual life; mortify in us all sensual desires, and quicken our hearts with thy holy love; that we may no longer esteem the vanities of the world, but place our affections entirely on thee;

Who didst die for our sins, and rise again for our justification.

O thou, our only hope and portion in the land of the living, may our thoughts and discourses still be of thee, our labours and sufferings all for thee;

Who didst die for our sins, and rise again for our justification.

THE HYMN.

The rising God forsakes the tomb,
  Up to his Father's courts he flies;
Cherubic legions guard him home,
  And shout him welcome to the skies!

Cease from your tears, ye saints! and tell
  How high our great deliverer reigns;
Sing, how he spoil'd the hosts of hell,
  And led the tyrant death in chains.

Say—Live for ever, glorious King!
  Born to redeem, instruct, and save;
Then ask—"O death, where is thy sting?
  And where thy victory, O grave?"

To Father, Son, &c.

O GOD, whose gracious providence restores to thy Church the voice of holy exultation, by the triumphant festival of *our* Saviour's resurrection; grant that *we* may devoutly participate in the holy joy which on this day animates the souls of the faithful; and, by purifying *our* hearts, give *us* a title, *we* beseech thee, to the high and glorious hopes, so firmly sealed by the resurrection of Jesus, of rising at last from *our* graves, and rejoicing thenceforth in a state of blissful immortality; through the same *our* Lord Jesus Christ; who having conquered death, liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

O MOST glorious Saviour and Redeemer Jesus, who didst die for *our* sins, and rise again for *our* justification; prepare *us*, by thy grace, for that blessed immortality which

thou hast made the portion of thy servants; that, placing *our* affections on things above, *we* may constantly aspire after the immortal glories of thy heavenly kingdom; and look forward with joyful hope, to the period when this corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality; when *our* souls and bodies, redeemed by thy mighty power, shall be admitted to the fruition of the blissful presence of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Mark, the Evangelist.

LET us remember Mark, whose name is blessed in all the Churches; let us praise our God, who, by this Evangelist, has published to us the glad tidings of salvation.

Beautiful, most beautiful are the feet of them who publish the Gospel of peace.

Their name shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

O GOD, who dost, on this day, summon thy Church to celebrate the festival of the blessed Evangelist St. Mark; grant that *we* may humbly adore thee for the glorious truths of salvation promulgated by his ministry, and may also show forth in *our* lives, *our* faith in that blessed Gospel which he proclaimed, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

Devotions for the Festival of St. Philip and St. James.

NOW it sufficeth thee, Philip; our Lord hath shown thee the Father; and henceforth, for ever, thou shalt see him face to face. *Alleluja.*

Happy art thou, O Philip; and thou, holy James, brother of our Lord, art gloriously happy in enjoying for ever the same blissful vision. *Alleluja.*

St. Philip, the Apostle, faithful and zealous, faithful even to death, ascended to his Master; and blessed James, the long reverenced Bishop of Jerusalem, thrown from the top of the *temple,* breathed out his soul in prayer for his murderers.

The senseless world thought their end dishonourable;
But, behold, their lot is among the blessed.

O GOD, by whose grace the blessed apostles, St. Philip and St. James, watered with their blood the heavenly seed of thy doctrine, which they had sown over the world; give *us* grace to celebrate their blessed memories, to imitate their zeal, their patience, their charity, and self-denial; that, by the grace of thy Holy Spirit, *we* may copy in *our* lives the holy example which they set *us*, and, finally, be blessed with them in the fruition of the glories of thy presence, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Rogation Days.

IF you ask the Father any thing in my name, he will give it you, says our Saviour, whose word cannot fail.

If we, being evil, know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him?

Heavenly Father, who art good, and delightest in doing good to all thy children;

Shut not thy merciful ear to the voice of our prayers.

O GOD, who, by thy Church, hast ordained this solemn time of supplication for all *our* necessities; open, *we* beseech thee, thy gracious ears to *our* prayers; and, by granting *us* those good things which *we* thy children, with humility and resignation ask of thee, *our* heavenly Father, so encourage *our* devotion and obedience, and so increase *our* hope and love, that *our* souls may be fixed supremely upon thee, and aspire after the fruition of thee, who art *our* all in all, for ever, through *our* Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Office of Devotion for the Festival of the Ascension.

TO-DAY our glorious Jesus ascended into heaven—come let us adore him. Alleluja.

I have finished the work which my Father gave me to do; and now it is time I return to him that sent me. Let not

your hearts be troubled; I go to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.

To-day our glorious Jesus ascended into heaven—come let us adore him. Alleluja.

Let not your hearts be troubled; I go to prepare a place for you; and I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.

To-day our glorious Jesus ascended into heaven—come let us adore him. Alleluja.

In the meanwhile, I will not leave you comfortless, but will pray the Father; and he shall give you another Comforter, the spirit of truth, to dwell with you for ever.

To-day our glorious Jesus ascended into heaven—come let us adore him. Alleluja.

PSALM.

Raise the eye of faith, O my soul, and look up; and behold the glory of thy crucified Saviour.

He who was dead and laid in the grave, is risen again, and ascended into heaven.

He made the light his garment, and commanded the clouds to be the chariot of his triumph.

The gates of heaven obeyed their Lord, and the everlasting doors opened to the King of glory.

Enter, bright King, attended with thy beauteous angels, and the glad train of saints who arose and came out of their graves at the resurrection.

Enter and repossess thy ancient throne; and reign eternally at the right hand of the Father.

May every knee bow low at thy exalted name; and every tongue confess thy glory.

May all created nature adore thy power; and the Church of the redeemed exult in thy goodness.

Whom have we in heaven, O Lord, but thee; there is none upon the earth that we desire but thee.

Why should our hearts still dwell upon earth; since the treasure of our hearts is returned to heaven?

Since our glorified Jesus is ascended above; to prepare us a place in his own blest kingdom:

A place of rest and secure peace; where we shall see, and praise and adore him for ever:

A place of joy and everlasting fruition; where we shall *love, and* possess and delight in him for ever.

How will our spirits be ravished with bliss, when admitted to the ineffable fruition of the Lord of glory!

We shall know all that is true, and love all that is good; and shall delight in that knowledge and love for ever.

No ignorance shall darken, nor error deceive us; *we shall be like the angels in heaven.*

No cares shall perplex us, nor crosses afflict us; *we shall be like the angels in heaven.*

Our joys shall be full, and pure and everlasting; *we shall be like the angels in heaven.*

Cheer thee, O my soul, and bless thy bounteous Lord; it is by him *we shall be like the angels in heaven.*

Cheer thee, and raise thy hopes yet gloriously higher; WE SHALL BE LIKE HIMSELF, *for we shall see him as he is.*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

The LESSON.—From HEBREWS xii.

Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Thither, O my soul, let us still be going, whither our Saviour Christ hath gone before; and where once to arrive, is always to be happy.

Since whatever we desire, we are sure to have; and whatever we have, can never be taken from us.

Let us believe, and obey, and suffer; let us read, meditate, and pray; heaven is a reward worthy of all our pains.

Since whatever we desire, we are sure to have; and whatever we have, can never be taken from us.

THE HYMN.

Erect your heads, eternal gates,
Unfold to entertain
The King of glory; see, he comes
With his celestial train.

Who is the King of glory? who?
The Lord for strength renown'd:
In battle mighty, o'er his foes
Eternal victor crown'd.

In awful state, the conquering God
Ascends his shining throne;
While tuneful angels sound abroad
The vict'ries he has won.

Fain would we join their praises here,
And so our souls should rise;—
O for some heavenly notes to bear
Our spirits to the skies.

There ye who love the Saviour sit—
There ye would fain have place,
Amongst your thrones, or at your feet,
So we might see his face.

To Father, Son, &c.

O GOD, who hast inspired thy Church to celebrate this day the memory of the Saviour's ascension, when, having finished on earth the great work of *our* redemption, he carried up his glorified humanity above the clouds to its eternal rest; grant, we humbly beseech thee, that, taking off *our* eyes from the vanities here below, *we* may stand continually looking after him into heaven; and surely expecting his appearance thence again at the last great day, may *we* be always ready to obey his call, to meet him in the clouds, and follow him into those blissful mansions which he went to prepare for *us* at thy right hand, for ever more; through the same *our* Lord Jesus Christ, who, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Office of Devotion for Whitsunday.

OFFICE FOR THE MORNING.

TO-DAY for us the Holy Ghost descended—come let us adore him.

Let us humbly implore his quickening grace, that we may worthily adore our eternal Sanctifier; who, from the Father

and the Son, eternally proceeds, and with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified.

To-day for us the Holy Ghost descended—come let us adore him.

Let us prepare our understandings to assent to his truths, and our wills to follow his divine inspirations; let us fill our memories with his innumerable mercies, and our whole souls with the glory of his attributes.

To-day for us the Holy Ghost descended—come let us adore him.

Let us confidently address to him our petitions, who promises to help the infirmities of our prayers; let us not doubt the bounty of his goodness, but hope he will grant what he inspires us to ask.

To-day for us the Holy Ghost descended—come let us adore him.

PSALM.

Blessed be thy name, O Holy Spirit, and blessed be thy adorable goodness.

When the eternal Father, by creating the world, had declared himself and his Almighty power;

When the increated Word, by redeeming mankind, had revealed himself and his infinite wisdom;

The Spirit of the Father and the Son comes down to be the Guide, the Comforter and Sanctifier of the faithful.

He descends from heaven in the shape of a *dove;* and gently lights on the Prince of Peace.

Again, he descends in the likeness of *fire;* and miraculously sits upon the heads of the disciples.

Under these symbols, dispensing mildness to allay the heat of zeal; and to quicken the indifferency of mildness.

Innocency to adorn the light of knowledge; and knowledge to direct the simplicity of innocence.

O blest and admirable teacher; who can instruct like the Spirit of God!

He, by his divine inspirations, perfected the disciples; and polished rude fishermen into eloquent preachers.

He touched the heart of a persecuting Pharisee; and instantly changed him into a glorious Apostle.

By thee, blest Spirit, we are at first regenerated in baptism; by thee confirmed in the imposition of hands.

By thee we are healed by the absolving sentence of divine

mercy; by thee prepared for that banquet of the bread and wine of angels.

By thee the priesthood is conferred and perfected; by thy holy unction we are governed, sanctified, and renewed.

If in the Church be any wisdom or knowledge; if any real sanctity or decent order;

If any faith in the mysteries of religion; if any hope of everlasting salvation;

If any love of God, as our sovereign bliss; if any charity one towards another;

All flows from thee and thy free grace; O thou boundless source of eternal mercy!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end. *Amen.*

The Lesson.—From Acts ii. 1.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now, when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

Thus were the words of the prophets fulfilled, and the promises of our Saviour performed, and the faith of the Church miraculously begun. *Alleluja.*

O may it still go on, and increase and multiply, till every nation speak in their own tongue, the wonderful works of God.

Govern, O blessed Spirit, the Church thou hast so wonderfully established; govern it with thy special grace; and always preserve it in obedience to thee, and us in obedience to it. *Alleluja.*

O may it still go on, and increase and multiply, till every nation speak in their own tongue, the wonderful works of God.

Come, Holy Spirit, the free Dispenser of all graces, visit the hearts of thy faithful servants, and replenish them with thy sacred inspirations.

Illuminate our understandings, inflame our affections, and sanctify all the faculties of our souls.

That we may know, and love, and constantly do the things that belong to our everlasting peace.

THE HYMN.

Come, mild and holy Dove,
Descend into our breast;
Do thou in us, make us in thee
For ever dwell and rest.

Come, and spread o'er our heads
Thy soft all-cheering wing;
That in its shade we safe may sit,
And to thee praises sing.

To thee, who givest us life,
Our better life of grace;
Who givest us breath, and strength, and speed,
To run and win our race.

We'll love thee, then, blest Guide;
But thou must give that love:
We'll humbly beg it of thy grace;
But thou our prayers must move.

Glory to thee, O Lord,
One, co-eternal three;
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Co-equal glory be.

O GOD, who didst miraculously send down thy Holy Ghost; to supply the absence of thy Son, to comfort his desponding followers, and instruct them in all things necessary to their great work, the conversion of the world; grant, *we* humbly beseech thee, that the same Holy Spirit which filled them with flaming and unconquerable zeal, may descend into *our* hearts, exciting *our* love, *our* joy, *our* zeal; and enabling *us* to bring forth those fruits of grace which are the only evidence of his blessed presence with *us;* through *our* Lord Jesus Christ, who, with thee, in the unity of the same blessed Spirit, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

OFFICE FOR THE EVENING.

[Repeat the Introductory Devotions in the Morning Office.]

THE PSALM.

Come, O my soul, with all thy faculties and affections; come, and prostrate, adore the eternal Spirit

He never will forsake us, if we chase him not away; but will guide and comfort us with his holy inspirations.

Come then to us, blest Spirit of truth; and govern our lives with thy holy maxims.

Deliver us from the spirit of profaneness and infidelity; from the spirit of error, and heresy, and schism.

Deliver us from the spirit of pride and avarice; from the spirit of anger, and sloth, and envy.

Deliver us from the spirit of drunkenness and gluttony; from the spirit of lust, wantonness, and impurity.

Vouchsafe to us the spirit of fortitude; the spirit of temperance, and justice, and prudence;

The spirit of wisdom, and understanding, and counsel; the spirit of knowledge, and piety, and fear of thee;

The spirit of peace, and patience, and benignity; the spirit of humility, sobriety, and chastity.

O thou, who never deniest thy favours, except we first deny our obedience;

Thou, who art often near us, when we are far from thee; who ready to grant when we are unmindful to ask;

Refuse not, O Lord, to hear us, now when we call upon thee, and make us still hear thee, when thou callest to us.

Fill our understandings with the knowledge of such truths as may fix them on thee, the eternal Verity.

Incline our wills to embrace such objects as may unite them unto thee, the sovereign Goodness.

Let not our faith grow wild with superfluous branches; nor be stripped into a naked and fruitless trunk.

Let not our hope swell up to rash presumption; nor shrink away into doubt and despair.

Let not our charity be cooled into a careless indifference; nor heated into a furious zeal.

Suffer us not obstinately to persist in any known wickedness; nor maliciously to oppose any known truth.

But above all, suffer us not, O thou blessed and Holy Spirit, to resist and quench thy holy inspirations.

Have mercy upon us, and govern us in our life; have mercy upon us, and save us in our death.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. *Amen.*

The LESSON.—From GALATIANS V.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

We are not our own, but the temples of the Holy Ghost; let us dedicate ourselves entirely to his service.

Blessed be thy name, O holy Spirit of God, who dividest thy gifts to every one as thou pleasest, and workest all in all.

In thee our sorrows have a Comforter to allay them; and our sins an Advocate to plead for them.

In thee our ignorances have a Guide to direct them; and our frailties a Confirmer to strengthen them; and all our wants a God to relieve them.

THE HYMN.

Creator Spirit, by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid,
Come, visit each believing mind,
Come, pour thy joys on human kind.

Plenteous of grace come from on high,
Rich in thy seven-fold energy!
Thou Strength of his Almighty hand,
Whose power does heaven and earth command.

Chase from our minds the infernal foe,
And peace, through faith and love, bestow;
And lest our feet again should stray,
Protect and guide us in thy way.

Make us eternal truths receive,
And practise all that we believe;
Give us (blest gift) thyself to see.
The Father and the Son through thee.

Immortal honours, endless fame,
Attend the Almighty Father's name;
The Saviour Son be glorified,
Who for lost man's redemption died

And equal adoration be,
Creator Spirit, paid to thee—
"Come, visit each believing mind,
"Come, pour thy joys on human kind!"

O ALMIGHTY God, and Father of all mercies, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, and who didst in the beginning, powerfully instruct, and graciously lead thy faithful servants, in a most eminent manner, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; grant *us*, by the same Spirit, to have a right judgment in all things that are necessary to *our* salvation, and refusing, for the sake thereof, the comforts and pleasures of this world, continually to rejoice in his holy consolation. Give *us*, *we* beseech thee, the spirit of wisdom, and understanding, and counsel, that, by the inspiration thereof, *we* may think those things that are good and suitable for *us*; the spirit of faith, fortitude, and power, that, by the guidance thereof, *we* may perform the same, in a manner most acceptable unto thee. Give *us* the spirit of prayer and supplication, that *we* may adore thee in spirit, with reverence, steadfastness and perseverance. O confirm *us* by this spirit, when *we* are weak; restore *us* by it when *we* go astray from thee; let thy grace prevent *our* falling by its power, and let thy mercy lift *us* up when *we* are down. Govern *our* senses, inspire *our* thoughts, guard *our* words, direct all *our* actions to thy glory; let thy Holy Spirit be unto *us* a spirit of patience under all crosses, and in all provocations; a spirit of trust and steadfast repose in thy care and providence; a spirit of forgiveness to *our* enemies; a spirit of mildness, contentment, and humility. To thee, *we* offer *our* whole spirit, soul, and body, and all that *we* are, and all that *we* have, to be entirely devoted unto thee. Keep *us* always safe from both *our* visible and invisible enemies; for the merits of thy Son Jesus Christ *our* Lord, who, being ascended into the heavens, left *us* not comfortless, but, according to his word, sent *us* this holy Comforter to abide with *us* to the end: To whom, therefore, with thee, and this *our* blessed Lord and Saviour, be all honour and glory, power, might, and dominion, in all the Churches of the Saints, and by all the host of the blessed. *from* this time forth and for evermore. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

Devotions for Trinity Sunday.

COME *let us adore the sacred Trinity, three persons and one God.*

To thee, the eternal Father, made by none;

To thee, the increated Son, begotten by the Father alone;

To thee, the blessed Spirit, proceeding from the Father and the Son;

To this one holy, consubstantial, and undivided Trinity, be ascribed all power, and wisdom, and glory, now and for ever.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.

Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory.

O ETERNAL *Father*, who, by the visible descent of the *Holy Spirit* on thy eternal and well-beloved *Son*, hast given thy Church a glorious display of the Trinity of persons in the adorable Godhead; grant that *we* may both in heart and voice, acknowledge this high and supernatural truth; and rejecting all the fallacious suggestions of *our* finite reason, humbly adore the glory of the eternal Trinity; till *we* come hereafter to thy blessed presence, to see the mystery revealed, O God, *our* Father, in thy own glorious face, through *our* Lord Jesus Christ, who, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth in the unity of the divine Majesty, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Barnabas.

LET us this day celebrate the great disciple, a companion of the Apostles, the bright messenger of the Gospel to the Gentiles, the son of consolation to multitudes, a burning and a shining light in the Church of Antioch, and the glory of Cyprus.

Let us celebrate his blessed memory, of whom it is said that he was a *good man*, and *full of the Holy Ghost and of faith;* who, being rich in lands and possessions, quitted all, that he might have a name written in heaven, and a treasure there, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt.

Precious is the memory of the Saint of this day, a faithful witness and martyr of Jesus Christ.

O LORD God Almighty, who has built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, under Christ the head corner-stone; and didst endue thy holy Apostle Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost; leave us not destitute, *we* humbly beseech thee, of thy manifold gifts and talents, nor yet of grace to make a right use of them always, to thy honour and glory, through Jesus Christ thy Son *our* Lord. *Amen.*

Devotions for the Festival of St. John the Baptist.

THIS is the great harbinger of the world's Redeemer, that burning and shining light, who despised the pleasures, and even conveniences of the world.

This is that prophet, and more than a prophet, of whom our Lord said, "Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; yet he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he."

The least in heaven was greater than John on earth.

But translated from earth, he now shines among the greatest in heaven.

O GOD, whose gracious providence calls *us* this day to celebrate the nativity of John the Baptist; grant, *we* beseech thee, that as *we* now fulfil the prophecy of thy holy angel, by rejoicing in the nativity of this great forerunner of thy Son, so *we* may improve both *ourselves* and others, by imitating his life; and may endeavour to learn those excellent lessons which he exhibited of mortification, humility, self-denial, zeal for justice, courage in defending the truth, and generous activity in doing good; through *our* Lord Jesus Christ, who, with thee and the Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth, ever, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Add the Collect for the Day.]

Devotions for St. Peter's Day.

TO-DAY Simon Peter ascended the cross, and joyfully passed to his Master.

This is he, who, after the example of his blessed Lord and Master, and remembering his words, *follow me*, by look

ing up steadfastly unto him, endured the cross, despising the shame.

The great Apostle of this day both preached the Gospel and died for it, confirming by his blood the truths he had delivered.

He faithfully finished the office whereto he had been ordained;

And went to receive his great reward. Alleluja.

O ALMIGHTY God, the Saviour of all those who trust in thee; may the example of thy holy Apostle, St. Peter, teach *us* not to expose *ourselves* to temptation, or to trust to *our* own strength. Let us ever acknowledge that *our* help standeth in thee, O Lord, who made heaven and earth; in the powerful intercession of the blessed Jesus, *our* advocate with the Father; in the comfortable assistance of thy Holy Spirit, whereby *we* are sealed to the day of redemption. And grant that, while we are watchful over our heart and ways, *we* may constantly rely on the succours of thy powerful grace; that thus neither the pleasures of life, nor the fear of death, may ever prevail on *us* to quit the way of thy commandments; but that *we* may always abound in the work of the Lord, looking for the glorious recompense of reward, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord and Redeemer. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. James.

NO sooner was James, the son of Zebedee, called by our Lord, than he immediately obeyed, and left all to follow Jesus.

He was one of the favoured disciples, admitted with Peter and John to the most endeared and familiar intercourse with his Master.

He was a *son of Thunder*, one of our Lord's brethren, and best beloved; who was sent, the first of the Apostles, to his Master.

Blessed James now enjoys his mother's desire;
Seated at the right hand of Jesus in his kingdom.

O GOD, who by the festival of the holy Apostle St. *James, dost revive* in *us* the memory of thy great mercy to the

world, in so glorious an example of readily following *our* blessed Redeemer; grant, that after the example of this great Apostle, *we* may withdraw *our* thoughts and affections from all vain and superfluous cares and pursuits, and fix them upon the immortal joys and glorious rewards which thou hast prepared for those who trust in thee. And let the example of thy holy martyrs stir *us* up to patience and fortitude, that *we* may be followers of those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises. Grant this, O merciful Saviour, who died for *us*, and rose again, and now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, blessed for evermore. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Bartholomew.

HIS life, and all that he had, St. Bartholomew freely gave for the testimony of the truth, and for the love of Jesus.

At the last day he shall rise, and be clothed with his flesh, and shall see and enjoy God for ever.

Happy are they who, made perfect through suffering, attain the blissful fruition of God for ever. *Alleluja.*

O BLESSED Lord God! who knowest the secrets of all hearts, and from whose all-searching eye no darkness can cover, nor privacy conceal; grant that *we* may ever cherish that sincerity and uprightness of intention and disposition which so eminently shone forth in this blessed Apostle. May we at all times, and in all places, have respect to all thy commandments, and put in practice all the duties of piety with a pure and unfeigned heart; that thus serving thee, in spirit and in truth, *we* may finally be admitted to the participation of the glories of thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Matthew.

BE not discouraged, O my soul, nor suppose thy sins to be unpardonable.

Matthew, of a sinner became a preacher; and of a publican *was called* to be an Apostle.

Fear not then the power of the grace of God; but take heed of delaying to embrace it; take heed of refusing to obey it; take heed of relapsing into the sins from which by its power thou hast been delivered.

O GOD, whose powerful call drew Matthew the publican from the receipt of custom to become an eminent Apostle and Evangelist in thy Church; grant, *we* beseech thee, that, celebrating the blessed memory of his life and death, which were worthy of his high and extraordinary vocation, *we* may advance thy praise for so glorious an example of thy grace; and, complying readily and faithfully with the calls of thy Holy Spirit, may *we* in like manner, forsake all to follow thee, through *our* Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Michael and all Angels.

PRAISE the Lord all ye his Angels; praise him all his hosts.

Bless our Lord all ye Angels of his, powerful in strength, doing his will, fulfilling his word.

O all ye powers of the Lord, bless ye our Lord; praise him and magnify him, ye ministering spirits that do his will.

Bless the Lord, O our souls; and forget not all his benefits.

For he hath given his holy Angels charge over us, to keep us in all our *ways.*

O BLESSED God, whose throne is encircled with myriads of glorious spirits who veil their faces, not being able to behold the brightness of thy Majesty, and who delight in discharging the high and glorious offices which thou dost assign them; give *us* grace, *we* beseech thee, to do thy will on earth, with the same diligence and industry, with the same zeal and cheerfulness with which thy blessed Angels do thy will in heaven; that, imitating their exemplary obedience, constant devotion, profound humility, unspotted purity, and extensive charity, *we* may secure their defence and protection in *our* necessities, and particularly in *our* last conflict with death and the powers of darkness; and, being by thy holy

Angels conducted to the mansions of glory, may *we* unite with their holy choir, in blessing and magnifying thy name Lord God of Hosts, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Luke the Evangelist.

WE commemorate this day the disciple of the great Apostle St. Paul, and the constant companion of all his travels.

We celebrate his glory, who deserved to be divinely recorded, as "the most dear physician and brother, whose praise is in the Gospel, throughout all the Churches."

Worthy is this blessed Evangelist of high honour, whom the Apostle of the Gentiles chose as one of his principal instruments in proclaiming the Gospel to the world.

He is highly honoured before the throne of the Lamb;

And, with the glorious messengers of peace, worships before it day and night.

O GOD, whose special grace rendered Luke the physician, a glorious disciple and evangelist; grant, that *we* may faithfully receive those blessed truths of salvation which he promulgated; and may imitate his example in endeavouring to advance the spiritual welfare of *our* fellow men, and in comforting and succouring all those who suffer for righteousness' sake, through Jesus Christ thy Son, *our* only Saviour; who, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, liveth, and reigneth, in the unity of the eternal Majesty, world without end. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of St. Simon and St. Jude.

THESE are they who planted the Church of God by their preaching and miracles, and watered it by their blood.

They rejected the flatteries of the world, and despised the menaces of their persecutors; and now for all they did, and *all that they* suffered, they enjoy an everlasting reward.

Let us imitate their faith, their patience, and their zeal, that with them we may be for ever blest, in the fruition of the glorious presence of God.

O GOD, who, by a glorious martyrdom, didst call the blessed Apostles, Simon and Jude, from their eminent labours in the vineyard, to a blissful rest in thy kingdom; grant *us* grace heartily to embrace that Gospel which thy holy Apostles promulgated, and, with an enlightened and mild, yet firm and persevering zeal, to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; that thus *we* may finally attain to the end of *our* vocation, even the salvation of *our* souls, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Festival of All Saints.

LET us behold and admire the conversation of the Saints and carefully strive to imitate their faith and patience.

Let us joyfully celebrate their memories; and like them strive to enter in at the strait gate.

Entered into the joy of their Lord, they magnify him for ever.

Their spirits exceedingly rejoice in God their Saviour.

Now they sing unto the Lord their Redeemer a new song.

Excellent is his praise in the congregation of these his Saints.

WE give thee thanks, O Lord, for the exalted virtues which thy grace inspired in thy Saints, and for the glorious rewards to which thou hast exalted them; for all the benefits which thou hast bestowed upon them in time; for all the blessings which thou hast reserved for them in eternity. *We* beseech thee so to join *us* in unity of spirit with them, that *we*, following their blessed steps in all virtuous and godly living, imitating their meekness and humility, their mortification and self-denial, their submission to thy will, their charity to the souls and bodies of men, their patience under sufferings, and their readiness to take up the cross, may obtain that exalted happiness which they now possess, and inherit those glorious promises of which they are now made partakers, through Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

[*Add the Collect for the Day.*]

Devotions for the Ember Days.

THE harvest truly is great; but the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

How shall we hear without a preacher?
And how shall they preach unless they be sent?
No man taketh this honour to himself,
But he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

O GOD, by whose providence thy Church, from ancient times, has set apart four solemn seasons for conferring orders upon chosen persons to supply the faithful with a succession of Priests and Deacons, and enjoined us all to implore, by extraordinary devotions, thy special assistance to a work which so much concerns us all; grant, *we* beseech thee, to the Bishops of the Church, grace to choose and ordain fit persons for the sacred functions of the ministry; and grant *us* the grace of reverence and due submission to those so ordained, as truly sent by thee, through *our* Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

[Add one of the prayers appointed by the Church to be used in the weeks preceding the stated times of ordination.]

Prayer to be used before Self-Examination.

ALMIGHTY GOD, the great Searcher of hearts, who knowest all our secret thoughts, nothing being hid from thine all-searching eye; dispose me frequently to examine my spiritual character and state, and to compare my actions with the rule of thy laws, that nothing contrary to thy holy will may ever find a settled abode in my soul. Teach me so to consider my ways, that I may turn my feet to thy testimonies. Grant that I may so impartially judge and condemn myself, that I may not be condemned at thy awful tribunal. Let not self-love deter me from the faithful examination of my soul. But do thou, O Lord, discover to me my sins and guilt; humble me under a sense of them; and dispose me sincerely and heartily to renounce all the sins and follies whereby I have provoked thy wrath and indignation. May I earnestly solicit thy pardon and forgiveness, through the merits of Jesus Christ, the Son of thy love. And may I, by prayer and watchfulness, stand on my guard against temota-

tion, and secure the protection of thy grace, which only can keep me from falling, and present me faultless before the presence of thy glory, through Jesus Christ, my only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

Prayer for an effectual Belief of the Christian Religion.

MOST gracious God, with all joy and thankfulness I adore thy infinite goodness, manifested to the children of men in the revelation of thy Holy Gospel. Blessed be thy name, for thy great love and compassion, in sending thy only begotten Son into the world, that we, miserable sinners, might live through him.

I believe, O God, that the blessed Jesus condescended to take upon him human nature, with all the infirmities and frailties of it, sin only excepted. I believe, O God, that he was the great Prophet sent from thee to instruct us in all the particulars of our duty, to give us right apprehensions of thy Divine Majesty, and to improve our natures to the greatest perfection of which they are capable. I believe, O God, that he confirmed his divine mission by greater miracles than any other man ever did, and by prophecies, which lay beyond the reach of any created understanding, the fulfilling of which convinces me, beyond doubt, that he was sent by thee. I believe, O God, that thou didst, by a voice from Heaven, declare him to be thy beloved Son, in whom thou art well pleased; and that all the prophecies concerning the Messias were fulfilled in him. I believe, O God, that he suffered death upon the cross for our redemption, and made there a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; that he has satisfied thy justice, and made reconciliation for us. I believe, O God, that he rose from the dead the third day, according to his own infallible prediction that he conversed forty days with his disciples; that in their sight he ascended up into Heaven, where he sits at thy right hand, interceding for sinners. I believe, O God, that he has fulfilled his promise to his disciples, of sending to them his Holy Spirit, and that the miraculous gifts bestowed upon them, proved his exaltation, at the same time that they enabled them to propagate his religion throughout the world.

Lord, I believe: increase my faith, and strengthen it

against the weakness and frailty of my own mind, against the false reasonings of skeptics and infidels, and against the pride and presumption of libertines. Let no unreasonable prejudice cloud the light of my understanding; let not pride and vanity obscure the proofs of thy holy Revelations; let no partiality pervert my judgment in matters of infinite consequence; but, above all, let no unreasonable passion or sinful lust corrupt my will, and indispose me to entertain thy holy and excellent laws.

Make my faith lively and effectual, and let the fruits of it appear in my life and conversation. Extend it to all the circumstances of thy holy obedience, that it may not only enlighten my mind, but purify my heart, and conquer my sinful passions. Make my faith perfect by charity, the true characteristic of thy disciples; that thus, by believing in thee, and loving thee, in this life, I may see and enjoy thee eternally in thy heavenly kingdom, through the merits of Jesus Christ my only Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

Collects and Prayer for the Church.

The Collects for Good Friday. Collect for the fifth Sunday after Trinity. Collect for the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity. Collect for the twenty-second Sunday after Trinity. Collect for St. John the Evangelist's day. Collect for St. Matthias' day. Collect for St. Peter's day. Collect for St. Bartholomew the Apostle. Collect for St. Simon and St. Jude, Apostles.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, who gatherest thy flock out of all nations into the saving fold of one holy Catholic Church, purchased by the precious blood of thy dear Son; preserve me evermore in the unity of thy Church, that I may be made partaker of thy mercy and grace, and finally obtain the end of my vocation, everlasting life. Holy Jesus, the redeemer and head of the Church, preserve her evermore by thy help and goodness. Defend her from the assaults of heresy and schism, and unite in her communion all those who call upon thy name. Remember, O Lord, thy servants the Bishops of thy Church; endow them with wisdom, and fill them with the Holy Ghost, that they may make choice of fit persons to serve thee in the ministry of thy Church, and may govern

thy Church to the edification of thy people, and the glory of thy great name. Remember, O Lord, according to the multitude of thy mercies and compassions, all the Presbyters and Deacons who compass thy holy altar; grant to those an unblameable Presbyterate, and preserve these unspotted in their ministry, that they may be found worthy to be advanced to a higher degree. Holy and Eternal Jesus, the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, bless all the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries. Endue them with the spirit of prudence and sanctity, faith and charity, confidence and zeal, diligence and watchfulness, that they may declare thy will unto the people faithfully, and rightly and duly administer thy holy sacraments. Grant, O Lord, that, by a true belief, and holy life, by well-doing and patient suffering, (when thou shalt call them to it) they may glorify thee the great lover of souls, and after turning many to righteousness, may shine as the stars in glory. Bless, also, O God, all the faithful with an humble filial love, and due obedience, for thy sake, to those whom thou hast set over them in the ministry. May thy blessing, Almighty God, thus rest on all estates of men in thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, truly and faithfully serving thee, the clearness of truth, and beauty of holiness, may daily increase in thy Church, until, at last, the whole of thy dispersed sheep being brought home to this flock, all who profess themselves Christians may hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life, and may be made one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, O Father, and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Prayer for a right Observation of Holy Days.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast established in thy Church, pastors, and teachers, and governors, *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;*[a] make me careful to observe all those institutions which are enjoined for these admirable ends; and always to esteem days set apart for thy worship, and dedicated to thy service, as a great relief to the infirmity of my nature, which is not capable of an uninterrupted contemplation of thee. Let not the affairs of this life, nor my eager-

[a] Eph. iv. 12.

ness in obtaining the good things of it, so far engross my thoughts, as to make me neglect those happy opportunities of working out my own salvation. Let not the love of pleasure prevail upon me to consume them in sensual enjoyments; but grant that my rejoicing may be accompanied with temperance and moderation, and dispose my mind, by all the refreshments of my body, to serve thee with greater diligence and cheerfulness all my days. Make me constant at these *Holy Seasons*, in attending thy public worship, and let me enter thy house with recollected thoughts, composed behaviour, and with a thankful and devout temper of mind. Let me hear thy word with serious attention, and with a particular application of it to the state of my own soul. Let me approach thy altar with fervent and heavenly affections, and with firm resolutions of better obedience. Let me commemorate the mysteries of my redemption with profound humility, with exalted thoughts of thy wonderful goodness, and with thankful acknowledgments of the great love manifested to the sons of men. Let the mortified lives of thy saints raise me above the pleasures of sense; and let the pattern of their piety and devotion, their humility and charity, their meekness and patient sufferings, be always so powerfully impressed upon my mind, that I may transcribe their example in my life and conversation: That thus observing these days of rest here below, I may celebrate an eternal rest with thee hereafter in thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer for Fasting.

O LORD, who, for our sakes, did fast forty days and forty nights; give me grace to use such abstinence, that my flesh being subdued to the spirit, I may ever obey thy godly motions, in righteousness and true holiness; to thy honour and glory, who livest and reignest with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Prayer for the Divine Favour upon our Fasting.

TURN thou me, O good Lord, and so shall I be turned; be favourable, O Lord, be favourable unto me, who turn to thee in weeping, fasting, and praying; for thou art a God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and of great pity; thou sparest when I deserve punishment, and in thy wrath thinkest

upon mercy: Spare me, good Lord, spare me, and let me not be brought to confusion; hear me, O Lord, for thy mercy is great, and after the multitude of thy mercies look upon me, through the merits and mediation of thy blessed Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer for the Profession of Repentance.

I ACKNOWLEDGE, O God, my own vileness, by reason of my sins, and am heartily grieved for the loss of thy favour. What humiliation, O Lord, can sufficiently express the greatness of such a loss! But I will weep and mourn, because I have offended thee; and I will repent as it were in dust and ashes. I will mortify those inordinate appetites which have so fatally betrayed me; I will contradict all those inclinations which have made me to stray from the ways of thy commandments. And do thou, O Lord, wean my soul from the pleasures of the body, which so often corrupt it, and render it incapable of relishing spiritual enjoyments. Let it not contract too great a familiarity with the delights and satisfactions of sense, since it was created for more exalted pleasures, and must shortly quit those here below; that so when I come to leave this world, I may be qualified for the blessed conversation of spirits in thy heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE END.

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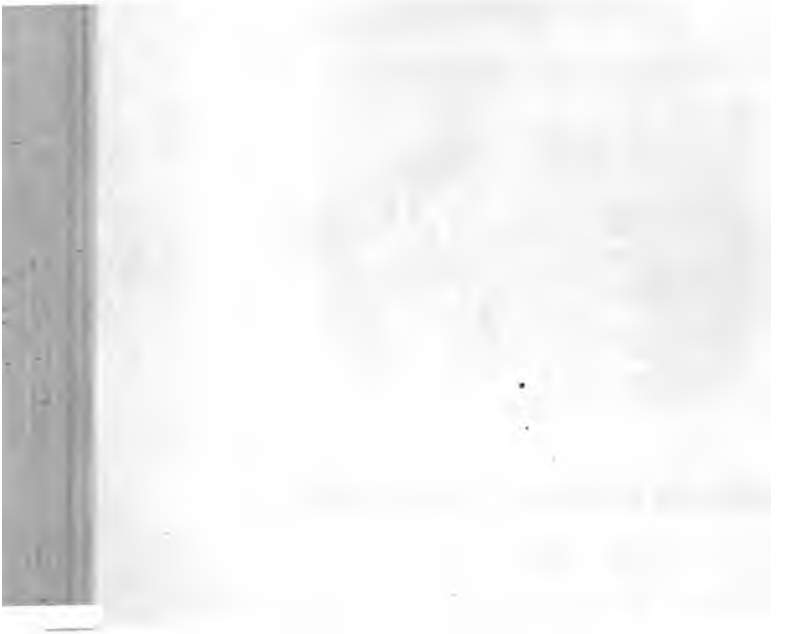

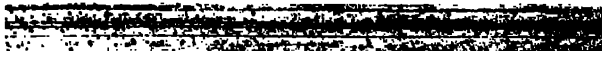

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